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EDITORIAL PREFACE

> "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honourable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

No section of the population of India can afford to neglect her ancient heritage. In her literature, philosophy, art, and regulated life there is much that is worthless, much also that is distinctly unhealthy; yet the treasures of knowledge, wisdom, and beauty which they contain are too precious to be lost. Every citizen of India needs to use them, if he is to be a cultured modern Indian. This is as true of the Christian, the Muslim, the Zoroastrian as of the Hindu. But, while the heritage of India has been largely explored by scholars, and the results of their toil are laid out for us in their books, they cannot be said to be really available for the ordinary man. The volumes are in most cases expensive, and are often technical and difficult. Hence this series of cheap books has been planned by a group of Christian men, in order that every educated Indian, whether rich or poor, may be able to find his way into the treasures of India's past. Many Europeans, both in India and elsewhere, will doubtless be glad to use the series.

The utmost care is being taken by the General Editors in selecting writers, and in passing manuscripts for the press. To every book two tests are rigidly applied: everything must be scholarly, and everything must be sympathetic. The purpose is to bring the best out of the ancient treasuries, so that it may be known, enjoyed, and used.

THE HERITAGE OF INDIA SERIES

GOTAMA BUDDHA

A BIOGRAPHY

(Based on the Canonical Books of the Theravadin)

BY

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INTRODUCTION

After the lapse of twenty-five centuries Gotama Buddha's influence is still a mighty power in the world. That an Indian monk, embracing poverty and the celibate life, writing no book, and setting up no hierarchy, should so profoundly sway the destinies of a continent is one of the most impressive facts of history. And the modern world, with its passionate belief in organisation and in wealth, may learn much from Gotama. Yet he is still strangely misunderstood.

"There is perhaps no person in history in regard to whom have arisen so many opinions that are either wholly or partly false," says Dr. Hopkins. "In Buddhism," says de la Vallée Poussin, "it is possible to make but few statements of which the opposite may not be affirmed and proved."

These sayings express very truly the confusion which still exists both as to the person of Gotama, and as to his essential teachings—a confusion due partly to the fact that there exists no early biography of him, and partly to the still more remarkable fact that literary criticism of Buddhist books has made very little progress, and that it is very difficult to-day to determine what are the authentic teachings of the Founder of Buddhism.

In a sense it is very remarkable that no early biography exists; for circumstances were ideal for the production of a lifelike record of Gotama's words and ways. What the "faithful hound" Boswell was to Dr. Johnson, that Ānanda, "the sage of the tireless ministry," might have been to Gotama; for he followed him, as he claims, "like a shadow," and had daily opportunities throughout a long life of service to study his

master. Why did Ānanda fail to do this priceless service to humanity?

Dr. Oldenberg, to whom students of Buddhism owe so much, argues that "the idea of biography was foreign to the mind of that age" and that "in those times the interest of the life of the Master receded entirely behind the interest attached to his teaching";[1] he shows, too, that neither in the case of Jesus of Nazareth nor in that of Socrates was a biography in the ordinary sense handed down.

Yet, even if we could not expect Ānanda to write biography as Boswell wrote it, it would have been an enormous gain if he had written "Memorabilia" like Xenophon, or better still, a gospel "like Luke the physician"!

Instead of that, he and the brethren seem to have handed on oral accounts of their Master's teaching, more or less stereotyped, but containing biographical material from which the modern editor must select. And this has been faithfully recorded in the Pāli Books. In studying them the modern editor at once becomes aware that he is debtor to a long series of others who have attempted the task, and though none of them can be called biographers in the ordinary sense, they have preserved much that is of supreme value to all who seek to know what manner of man Gotama was, and what was the secret of his amazing success.

The material at our disposal is as follows:

1. The Introduction to the *Jātaka*, known as the *Nidānakathā*: this was written down in Pāli in the monasteries of Ceylon about the middle of the fifth century A.D., a thousand years after the death of the subject. It contains references to other biographies now lost, and gives us the narrative from his birth to the visit he made to his family after attaining Enlightenment. It has been translated into English by Dr. Rhys Davids, and parts of it are also in H. C. Warren's *Buddhism in Translations*.

[1] Oldenberg, *Buddha*, E.T., p. 79.

2. The *Mahāvagga*, a very old part of the *Vinaya*, carries the narrative on, giving a number of instances following the Enlightenment, and dealing especially with the foundation of the *Saṅgha*.

3. Ancedotes contained in the Dialogues or *Suttas*, in some of which Gotama tells of his early search, and in others of which are given details of his dealings with men. The most valuable are those of the *Majjhima Nikāya*, where we find Gotama portrayed, as Dr. Anesaki has said, as "a vivid human personality."

With these we may class such gnomic utterances as the *Dhammapada* and the *Itivuttaka*, which no doubt contain many authentic "Logia" of Gotama.

The second and third are early canonical works, though probably several hundred years had elapsed before they were written down. They contain evidence of the process of deification of Gotama, yet there is much in them which may be regarded as real history.

4. Later and less reliable is the poetical *Buddha Carita*, composed probably in the reign of Kanishka by Asvaghosa, as late as A.D. 100. It is written in Sanskrit, and seems to aim at filling up the details of the story of Gotama's life until the Enlightenment.

Later still is the *Lalita Vistara*, which is also written in Sanskrit and carries us down to his first sermon at Benares. On this is based Sir Edwin Arnold's poem, "The Light of Asia," and scholars are agreed that it is about as historical as Milton's Paradise poems.

5. Still later is the *Jina Carita*, a Pāli poem written in the twelfth century A.D. by Buddhadatta in Ceylon.

6. Lastly, belonging to a literary period two thousand years after the death of Gotama is the *Mālālankara Watthu*, known best in Bishop Bigandet's translation, *The Life or Legend of Gaudama Buddha*.

In these later works the process of deification is almost complete, and I have preferred not to use them in compiling this work.

In addition to these literary sources we have the great sculptured monuments of Buddhism, some of

which are as early as the second century B.C. and contain a great deal of material for reconstructing the India of Gotama's day. Strangely enough, they record many of the incidents in his life which the modern biographer must regard as legendary.

These earlier monuments, however, whilst they sprang up to satisfy "the commemorative instinct," and whilst they establish the historicity of Gotama, contain no figure of him, but content themselves with symbols illustrating the great events of his life. Portraits and statues of him were made from the first century B.C.

One of the instructions which he seems to have given to Ānanda as he lay dying is that the pious worshipper should visit four sacred spots connected with his life: the place of his birth—Kapilavatthu; the place of his Enlightenment—Bodh-Gayā; the place of his first sermon—the Gazelle Park near Benares; and the place of his passing away—Kusināgara.[1]

These great events are indicated in Buddhist art by the following symbols: the Elephant typifies his birth, commemorating Queen Māyā's dream; the Bo Tree commemorates his Enlightenment; the Wheel symbolizes the beginning of his public ministry; and the *stupa* or burial mound his passing into *Nibbāna.*[2]

When we seek for early portraits of Gotama then, we find only symbols. Yet tradition assigns to him well-known features, and we find here and there in the books, *e.g.* in the "Song of Kassapa" quoted below, indications of his personal characteristics which are consistent with the traditional statues of him, and which help to strengthen our conception of him as a serene and gracious figure, lofty of brow, majestic of mien, with eyes at once loving and searching—a man who conceived his task, above all, as that of a teacher of morals.

His story, is that of a singularly gracious and noble life, and of a character which reminds us (albeit in fitful glimpses which we get through the stiff and stilted

[1] *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*, V, 16, 22.
[2] This is the Pāli form of *Nirvāna.*

passages of the scholastic narrative) now of Socrates, now of Francis of Assisi, now, though less vividly, of some Hebrew prophet; for Gotama combined in his person a passion for moral and intellectual truth with a gracious compassion and simplicity which endear him to our hearts.

To Dr. Oldenberg, Professor de la Vallée Poussin, Dr. Rhys Davids, the Bhikku Silācāra, and other Western scholars who have made available so much material for this study, I am glad to acknowledge my indebtedness: as also to the long succession of Eastern disciples, known and unknown, who have kept his memory green. To Mrs. Rhys Davids I owe special thanks for permission to quote so freely from her books.

Lastly, I am indebted to the Cambridge University Press and to Professor Rapson for permission to use the map contained in his *Ancient India*.

I

THE EARLY LIFE OF GOTAMA

Neither mother nor father nor any kinsfolk can do thee service like a well-directed mind.—Dhammapada 43.

By the sixth century B.C., the Aryan and Mongolian invaders of India had established themselves along the lower slopes of the Himālayas, and had poured into the Ganges valley. It was along this valley that early Buddhism was to spread, and to understand it aright we must know something of the mingled civilisation which they established. Politically it was like that of early Greece, and the systems of government varied from autocratic monarchies to self-governing communities. Of the former type we learn from Brahmin, Jain, and Buddhist literature that there were sixteen, and there were many smaller states, some of which were more or less feudatory to their larger neighbours, some independent.

The chief of the larger kingdoms were those with which early Buddhism was most concerned : Kosala, corresponding to the modern Oudh, with its capital either at Sāvatthi[1] or at Ayodhyā ; Magadha, corresponding to South Bihar,[2] with its capital at Rājagaha,[3] and Vidēha, corresponding to North Bihar, with its capital at Mithilā. These kingdoms were separated from one another by rivers, the Ganges dividing Vidēha from Magadha, and the Sandanīra dividing it from Kosala.

[1] Now Sahet Mahet on the river Rapti.

[2] Bihar gets its name from the many Vihāras or Buddhist monasteries which it at one time boasted.

[3] Now Rajgir, on whose five hills religious teachers still gather their bands of disciples.

The kings of these countries were often related to one another by marriage ; thus we find that Bimbisāra of Magadha had amongst his wives the sister of Agnidatta Pasenādi of Kosala and also "the Lady of Mithilā."

Amongst the self-governing communities was that of the Licchavi nobles, living in and around Vesālī, who, after Gotama's death, came under the suzerainty of Ajātasattu ; but the Śākyas, Gotama's own people, were already tributary to the kings of Kosala. Their chief town was Kapilavatthu, and their total territory probably covered some nine hundred square miles, partly on the slopes of the Himālayas, and partly in the rich rice fields which stretched out like a great carpet below, irrigated by abundant streams pouring down from the mountain-side, and bordered on the east by the Rohinī, and on the west and south by the Achirāvatī.[1] It is possible that both Licchavis and Śākyas, like the modern inhabitants of the Tarai of Nepal, were Mongolians and that Gotama was not of Aryan stock.[2]

This rich and fertile land was the early home of Gotama Buddha, a land of great beauty, with the mighty snow rampart of Himālaya towering above it, and below it the rich green of sandal (*sāl*) trees and young oaks, and the still more wonderful green of rice fields.

His father's name, Suddhōdana, which means "Pure Rice," suggests that they were an agricultural people ; but they belonged to the Kshatriya or warrior caste, and the early legends tell of ambitious plans which the Chieftain had for his son. At the least, we may imagine that he desired the boy to succeed him in the

[1] The Achirāvatī is now the Rapti ; the Rohinī retains its ancient name. These rivers meet near Goruckpur, 100 miles north of Benares.

[2] See Vincent Smith, *Oxford History of India*, p. 49. Dr. D. B. Spooner maintains that Gotama was of Iranian descent. Perhaps both these views are right, for there was much intermarriage.

leadership of the clan; for the Śākyas seem to have been led by a hereditary chief, not like their neighbours, the Licchavis, by a *Nāyaka*, elected to the post. But from the leadership of a clan to the position of "Universal Monarch," *Chakkavatti*, is a far cry; and the legend that this was the destiny marked out for the young Gotama may be dismissed as unlikely. Yet it is not impossible; for less than three centuries later Chandragupta and his house, starting from smaller beginnings and with far less of genius than Gotama, achieved this position and during his lifetime the foundations of this mighty empire were laid by the kings of Magadha. However that may be, Suddhōdana was not a king as the legends claim: in some passages in the early Buddhist books he is called *Rāja*, but so are all the Licchavi and Śākya nobles; and only in the *Theragāthā* commentary is he called *Mahārāja*. It is agreed amongst scholars that he was one of numerous petty chieftains. That he had a pride of race worthy of a Scottish laird seems clear, and even if he had no higher ambition than that his son should succeed him, we may be sure that he regarded this as no mean destiny. The very name Śākya means "the mighty"!

To illustrate the pride of these border clans we may quote an early legend, probably apocryphal, which describes how, when the King of Kosala asked for a Śākya in marriage, the chiefs gathered in their Mote Hall and decided that they could not lower their dignity by allowing one of their freeborn daughters to marry him; so they sent back the bastard daughter of one of them by a slave woman.[1]

Life at the house of one of these chiefs would be not unlike that at a Scottish castle in the Middle Ages; not only was there the same pride of race, but there was much the same feudal system, and much the same

[1] See Rhys Davids, *Buddhist India*, p. 11. This insult led, we are told, to the sack of Kapilavatthu and the massacre of the Śākyas by Vidudābha towards the end of Gotama's life or soon after his death.

strange wayfaring life; scholar and minstrel, noble and friar, soothsayer and jester, ascetic and juggler, would pass in a fascinating panorama before the son of the house, and a rough hospitality awaited all.

The boy was born probably about the year 560 B.C. at a pleasaunce between the capital of the Śākyas and that of the Koliyas, a clan from whom his mother, the Lady Māyā, seems to have sprung. To mark the site of this garden of Lumbini a pillar was erected by the Emperor Asoka about 244 B.C. with the inscription, "Here the Exalted One was born."

Amongst the many legends of his birth and early days there is one which seems reasonable enough; it tells how the old man Asita came to see the babe, and foretold a great future for him. Another legend tells that his mother died soon after his birth, and that it was her sister, the Lady Pājāpati, Suddhōdana's second wife, who brought him up. He was called Siddhattha, that is, "Desire Accomplished," but his family name was Gotama, a name derived from one of the ancient families of *rishis* or seers of Vedic times.[1]

We can imagine the little boy, who seems to have been a son of Suddhōdana's old age, brought up with loving care, and even spoiled by his doting aunt and her women. He probably learned early an imperious habit, and the legends are lavish in their description of his pampered childhood and youth: "I wore garments of silk, and my attendants held a white umbrella over me," he used to tell his disciples in after days. As he walked out thus we may be sure that the boy's eyes and ears were busy!

His mind would be formed very largely by the things he saw in the everyday life of his people. Living in the midst of a rural community, he would get

[1] It is not clear why a warrior clan should have had a Brahmin family name. See Oldenberg, *Buddha*, E.T., pp. 413, 414. Dr. Rhys Davids says: "It is a curious fact that Gautama is still the family name of the Rājput chiefs of Nagara, the village wrongly identified with Kapilavastu by Cunningham" (*Buddhism*, p. 27).

to know the life of the villages dotted about amongst the rice fields, and of the jungle, and the legends attribute to him an early love of the animals for whom in later life he was to do so signal a service.

Hunting was perhaps the chief sport of the Kshatriyas, and sacrifices kept the Brahmins busy. It may well have been some victim of the chase or of the altar that first kindled in him as a boy the divine compassion which still makes his memory so fragrant.

In the long sunny days of summer he would play, perhaps with his cousins Ānanda and Devadatta, certainly with his friend Kāludayin, the immemorial outdoor games of his country, chariot-races, wrestling, running, hunting, a kind of "hopscotch," and many others common to-day in India; and in the wet season, marbles, dice, chess, "tip-cat," "spillikins," and many more.[1] Or they would sit and listen in the flickering lamplight to the legends of ancient India, celebrating the deeds of heroes and of gods; or some village Uncle Remus would tell them old folklore tales, many of which we in the West know in Æsop and La Fontaine, and which in days to come Gotama was to turn to good account. Stories, too, there were of a more fearsome kind, of ghosts and goblins, or of red-eyed ogresses who stole and ate children, or let loose plagues to devastate whole districts. And often as they passed some dark tree they would make a little offering to the spirit hiding there, who might be in a bad temper, and who must needs be propitiated. Or they would take their part in the ceremony of feeding the hungry spirits, "*Petas*," who thronged the thresholds of their old homes, or jibbered hungrily at crossroads.[2]

Thus fear played its part in their early training, and a further tinge of mystery and horror was added to it at the sight of self-inflicted tortures, common then as now in India. The ascetic with his terrible

[1] *Cullavagga*, I, 13; *Tevijja Sutta*, II; *Dialogues of the Buddha*, Rhys Davids, II, 9-11.

[2] Cf. *The Heart of Buddhism*, p. 48 (from the *Khuddaka Nikāya*).

emaciated body and distorted limbs would make a keen appeal to the imagination of the child, and perhaps an indelible impression shaping his after life. Of such asceticism he spoke in old age, and his description of what he himself endured may well serve as a picture of some Indian *Sādhu* who arrested his attention as a boy; as indeed it might portray the *Sannyāsī* of to-day:[1]

"I have fed my body on mosses, grasses, cowdung. I have lived upon the wild fruits and roots of the jungle, eating only of fruit fallen from the trees. I have worn garments of hemp and hair, as also foul clouts from the charnel house, rags from dust heaps. I have wrapped myself in the abandoned skins and hides of animals; covered my nakedness with lengths of grass, bark, and leaves, with a patch of some wild animal's mane or tail, with the wing of an owl. I was also a plucker-out of hair and beard, practised the austerity of rooting out hair from head and face. I took upon myself the vow always to stand, never to sit or lie down. I bound myself perpetually to squat upon my heels, practised the austerity of continual heel-squatting. A 'thorn sided one' was I; when I lay down to rest, it was with thorns upon my sides. . . .

"I betook myself to a certain dark and dreadful wood and in that place made my abode. And there in the dense and fearsome forest such horror reigned, that the hair of whomsoever, not sense-subdued, entered that dread place, stood on end with terror."

Such scenes would help to quicken his already luxuriant imagination, and to make him sensitive; might they not plant in him a *phobia*, which later led to a one-sided insistence upon the sorrow and pain of life?

But whilst his emotions were being thus stirred, his mind was also being instructed. We cannot doubt that he sat at the feet of some Indian *guru* and learned from him something of the earlier Vedas and of the central teachings of contemporary Hinduism. Probably it was

[1] *Dialogues of Gotama*, tr. by Sīlācāra, I, 97-99.

not very much,[1] but it gave a permanent cast to his mind, so that later he never questioned such doctrines as those of *Karma* (action and its result) and *Samsāra* (transmigration)[2]—doctrines probably taught him almost in infancy by those about him in his father's household, and re-emphasized by his *guru*, who at the age of ten or eleven would initiate him, giving him the bow-string girdle, the madder undervest, and the deerskin robe of the warrior, and instructing him each year from July to October in Vedic lore.

At other times he and his friends would sit and listen to some wandering scholar expounding his system in the courtyard of the family home, and would note, half-consciously, the good-humoured tolerance with which his elders listened even though they did not understand. And after the good man was gone, he would join in the kindly fun poken at him, and laugh at some name such as "eel-wriggler," "hair-splitter,"[3] or "weaver of trifles" which they would coin for him. But the ideal of a *Buddha*—or Wise Teacher who would give his people peace—this would, no doubt, be mentioned by some more earnest soul, and it seems to have found a lodging in the mind of the young Siddhattha.

Of the Brahmins, too, and of their claims, he would learn much ; one view from his *guru*, another from his Kshatriya relations, "who esteemed the Brahmin highly whilst they esteemed themselves more highly still"; and would speak of them much as a mediæval baron in the West might speak of the clergy of his day, good worthy folk, but not, for the most part, of noble birth. Or perhaps his father would take him to the court of Magadha when he went to pay homage, and

[1] Dr. Oldenberg argues that "in the training of nobles in those lands which were but slightly attached to Brahminism, more attention was paid to martial exercise than to knowledge of the Veda," and that "Buddhists have not attributed Vedic scholarship to their master" (*Buddha*, E.T., p. 100).

[2] Though, as we shall see, he was the first to make the *Karma* doctrine reasonable and ethical, and he profoundly modified the doctrine of *Samsāra*.

[3] *Dialogues*, 137, 138.

here, too, he would learn that the great kings did not altogether relish the growing power and claims of these Brahmins, but were ever ready to become patrons of any who set up a rival teaching. He would exult in the great rock fortress of Giribajja, and the new town of Rājagaha, then probably still being built—both symbols of Kshatriya domination.

Or he may have gone to Sāvatthi or to the opulent and dissolute Vesālī, whose rich nobles he later described as "like a host of gods." It is interesting to speculate upon how such journeys were accomplished. Probably they would accompany some merchant caravan as it passed along one of the great trade routes of the day, routes he was to use so often in the long years of his wanderings as a religious teacher.

We can imagine the boy wide-eyed with excitement, and revelling in this long sunny picnic from Kapilavatthu along the foot of the mountains to the neighbourhood of Vesālī, and then south to the Ganges and Rājagaha. The long caravan, with its loaded camels and throng of servants, would pass through Kusinārā, Pāva, and Nālandā—names famous in after days because of their association with him and his Order. Of the two latter, one was to become the capital of a mighty Buddhist empire, the other the seat of one of the great Buddhist universities. Or, they may have gone upon a pleasant river trip on the Ganges or the Jumna.[1]

Arrived at one of the royal cities he would see the king as he is pictured in ancient sculptures at Bharhut and elsewhere, seated or standing in his four-horse chariot, and accompanied by the royal elephants, the archers, the cavalry, the infantry, and all the busy throng of courtiers and court servants. A list of such is given in an early narrative telling of the visit of King Ajātasattu to Gotama sixty years later, and as Professor Rhys Davids has pointed out, they are all "just the sort of people employed about a camp or palace." In the palace itself, probably a two-storied building with

[1] See Rhys Davids, *Buddhist India*, p. 103.

an upper apartment for the women and open courtyards below, the boy would watch the gamblers dicing, and learn how the kings got plentiful revenue from their winnings. Or he would listen eagerly to the latest tales of some terrible punishment inflicted by the autocrat, or of some ambitious project for subduing a neighbouring state. That these kings were often tyrannical in the extreme is suggested by several passages in the Buddhist books, which describe monstrous tortures inflicted for sins such as theft, highway robbery, and adultery:

"Then the rulers cause them to be seized and condemn them to various punishments, such as, to be flogged with whips, sticks or switches; to have their feet cut off; or to have both their hands and their feet cut off; to have their ears cut off; to have their nose cut off; or to have both ears and nose cut off. . . . Or they are basted with boiling oil, torn to pieces of dogs, impaled alive, or beheaded; and so they come by death or deadly hurt."[1]

The boy would discover, too, the growing rivalry between the great states of Magadha and Kosala, which has been called the leading point in the politics of the day; for the kingdom of Kosala had made rapid progress, and a great struggle was imminent between it and Magadha. He could not help learning that the rival kings attached great importance to the allegiance of such clans as the Śākyas and Licchavis; it was indeed by the help of the latter that the king of Magadha eventually obtained supremacy.

No doubt, therefore, the boy and his companions would be honourably entertained, and made free of royal hospitality; and they would take their share as befitted young nobles in the royal sports. Then, as the caravan made its way homewards, there would be much discussion of the rival kingdoms, and as they gathered round the camp fire at nights some graybeard would tell

[1] This kind of thing was even done later on in the interests of Buddhism by Ajātasattu after his conversion (*Dialogues of Gotama*, tr. by Silācāra, I, 110).

of the glories of the *Chakkavatti*—that ideal king who was to rule in righteousness, loving and greatly loved.

Thus the boy grew up, proud of race, strong in body, quick in imagination, not uninstructed in Vedic learning, and alive to the political and social movements of his day.

In due course he was married, and entered into the responsiblities of his station, with some share, no doubt, in the administration of his father's affairs. Perhaps he now began to take part in discussions with the wandering sophists; certainly he was accumulating experiences and ideas which drove him forth to become himself a wandering ascetic, and eventually a teacher preeminent amongst them all. The form of the great discovery which made him *Buddha* suggests that he was not unfamiliar with the medical systems of his day, and it may well be that from some court physician such as Jīvaka, who is mentioned in the books and who afterwards ministered to his physical needs,[1] he learned the current theories of disease, and the methods of its treatment.

How best could he serve his people? We can imagine him in these days of early manhood, gazing out with longing over the rich plains and clustering hamlets of his father's domain till a passionate patriotism filled him with yearning to serve these people that he loved and to win for them some abiding happiness. Like the cultured Indian boy of to-day, he would have ideals large and a little vague, a passionate aspiration but dimly understood; like other adolescents he was potentially a knight-errant. Gradually, as he grew to man's estate, these ideals would take form and shape. And it is perhaps this process which is commemorated in the old legend of a vision[2] which the gods sent him; vivid pictures of old age and disease and death, culminating in that of a yellow-robed *Sannyāsī*, seeking freedom

[1] In a very thorough way! See *Sacred Books of the East*, XVII, 191.

[2] Described in *Anguttara Nikāya*, I, 145, as a series of "thoughts" or "ideas."

from them all. Such, at any rate, was the resolve to which his musings brought him, and which at the age of twenty-nine he resolutely carried out. A *Chakkavatti*? Yes, perhaps, but of a kind new to his people or familiar to them as the Wise Teacher—*Buddha*—whose sway is made possible by a change of heart and mind.

> " Unto this I came
> And not for thrones : the Kingdom that I crave
> Is more than many realms—and all things pass
> To change and death."

The legend tells that as he tore himself from the ties of home, messengers came to him from his wife's chamber announcing the birth of his little son. "Call his name Rāhula, a bond," he cried, "for here is another bond which I must break." India has for more than 2,500 years acclaimed this as an heroic sacrifice, much as the Christian Church, in spite of 2,000 years of Christianity, still, for the most part, admires the readiness with which Abraham set about offering up his only son. Yet the conscience of to-day can approve neither; and should a vision urge the modern father to take either step, he would refuse to believe his senses; for the God whom we have learned to know both in East and West could not ignore the rights of wife or child.

The young Gotama, like the old Abraham, was the son of a patriarchal age, a man of his time, and is to be judged accordingly. It does not lessen our veneration for him as a man, but it must be set in the scales of any fair-minded biographer against the tremendous claims which his disciples very soon began to make on his behalf.

II

QUEST AND CONQUEST

> " *While life is good to give, I give, and go*
> *To seek deliverance and the unknown Light.*"
> —*The Light of Asia.*

"In the prime of my youth, O disciples, a black-haired boy passing into manhood, against the will of my sorrowing parents, I shore off hair and beard, and putting on the yellow robe went out from home, vowed henceforward to the wandering life."

In these quiet words Gotama, now become Śākyamuni, the Solitary of the Śākyas, is recorded to have described one of the great events of history, an event big with meaning for untold millions. There is amongst the Ājanta frescoes an exquisite picture of him at this turning-point in his life. It belongs to the seventh century A.D. and cannot be called a portrait; but it is notable for a majesty and a sorrowful tenderness that remind us of da Vinci's study of the youthful Christ. It is thus that the Buddhist world has treasured the memory of one who "out of compassion for mankind"[1] endured unspeakable austerities in seeking salvation, or freedom from rebirth.

The spirit of this great adventure is thus finely described by Fielding Hall:

"He went to seek wisdom, as many a one has done, looking for the laws of God with clear eyes to see, with a pure heart to understand, and after many troubles,

[1] It seems probable that this altruistic motive became articulate later; the young Gotama was primarily concerned with winning his own freedom.

after many mistakes, after much suffering, he came at last to the truth.

"Even as Newton sought for the laws of God in the movement of the stars, in the falling of a stone, in the stir of the great waters, so this Newton of the spiritual world sought for the secrets of life and death, looking deep into the heart of man, marking its toil, its suffering, its little joys, with a soul attuned to catch every quiver of the life of the world. And as to Newton truth did not come spontaneously, did not reveal itself to him at his first call, but had to be sought with toil and weariness, till at last he reached it where it hid in the heart of all things, so it was with the prince. He was not born with the knowledge in him, but had to seek it as other men do. He wasted time and labour following wrong roads, demonstrating to himself the foolishness of many thoughts. But never discouraged, he sought on till he found, and what he found he gave as a heritage to all men for ever, that the way might be easier for them than it had been for him."[1]

He went first to Rājagaha, the royal city of Magadha, to teachers whom it may well be he had already visited as a boy, or whose fame had reached him in his father's home. "Thus vowed to homelessness and seeking the highest, even the way of peace, I went where the ascetic Alāra Kālāma dwelt and thus addressed him: 'Friend Kālāma, I would lead the life of a recluse as your pupil and follower,' and very swiftly I learned, O disciples, what he had to teach."[2]

[1] *The Soul of a People*, H. Fielding Hall, pp. 20, 21.

[2] That early Buddhism owed much to the Sāṁkhya system has been argued by Garbe and others. But the system is probably of a later date: and that Gotama owed this knowledge to Alāra Kālāma is unlikely. It is, however, significant that the Japanese legend says that Alāra gave to him "two staves"—which are the mark of ascetics of the Sāṁkhya School. *Majjhima Nikāya*, I, 163-65. Lakshmi Narasu says quite confidently, "He was evidently a follower of Kapila, the reputed founder of the Sāṁkhya system of philosophy" (*Essence of Buddhism*, 2nd Edition, p. 6).

The *Buddha Carita* (*Sacred Books of the East*, XLIX) gives a fairly full summary of his views as reconstructed by Asvaghosa.

It probably did not amount to much; and they oung Indian noble was already familiar, we may be sure, with the current Indian systems of religion. We learn of sixty-two different schools of thought in the India of his day, and the Kshatriyas from whom he came were keenly interested in these wandering teachers, often providing quiet places of refuge for them, and always glad, as we have seen, when they combated the growing ascendency of the Brahmins. What was it that Alāra Kālāma taught him? It is described as the "realm of nothingness"[1] and as "the eight stages of meditation."[2] And that is all we know about it. Probably his system was one of ascetic meditation, and his doctrine that the soul can be set free from the body. Though he was urged to become fellow-leader with Alāra of his company of ascetics, Gotama turned away, reflecting that this teaching "did not lead to the supreme goal, but only to the realm of nothingness," and went on to another teacher, Uddaka, the disciple or son of Rāma, with no better success. So he left the rockhewn hermitages on the hillsides of Rājagaha "thoroughly dissatisfied,"[3] and came to the town of Uruvelā. "And there I spied a beautiful and quiet spot among the trees of the forest, with a clear river flowing past them, and with fields and pasture lands around them. Here, thought I, is a pleasant and fitting place for mental effort."

The river seems to have been the Neranjarā—the modern Phalgu—and here five mendicant hermits joined him, and with him for six years practised such extreme asceticism that they were worn to skin and bone. A Græco-Indian statue of Gandhāra, terrible in its realism, shows the great teacher at the limit of his strength, and he seems himself to have left a word-picture with his disciples: "Like wasted withered reeds became all my limbs, like a camel's hoof my hips,

[1] *Ibid.* [2] *Jātaka*, I, 65-69.

[3] *Discourses of Gotama*, tr. by Silācāra, II, 99 (from the *Majjhima Nikāya*).

like a wavy rope my backbone, and as in a ruined house the roof-tree rafters show all aslope, so sloping showed my ribs because of the extremity of fasting. As in a deep well the watery gleam far below is scarcely to be seen, so in my eye-sockets, the gleam of my eye-balls, far sunken, well-nigh disappeared, and as a severed gourd uncooked and left out in the sun becomes rotten and shrunken, so hollow and shrunken became the skin of my head. When I touched the surface of my belly my hand touched my backbone, and as I stroked my limbs the hair, rotten at the roots, came away in my hands."[1] Such heroic measures are not uncommon in India, and had Gotama succumbed to them it would be only one more added to the long tale of her self-immolations. He almost did succumb, so that messengers hurried to Suddhōdana to tell him that his son was dead. But with splendid sanity he realised at the eleventh hour that self-torture was not the road to Enlightenment, that he had been "trying to tie the air into knots."[2] Though it meant parting company with his devoted disciples who left him "when he was most in need of sympathy," he took food and returned to a more normal way of life. He ceased to be a *tāpasa* (self-torturer) and became a *paribbājaka* (wanderer). The books attribute to Māra, the Evil One, a longing which now assailed him to return to wife and child and to resume a truly normal life.

At the end of these six terrible years, of which we have no detailed knowledge, the great day of his Enlightenment was at hand. Turning aside to a great grove of trees close by the river (the place is now called Bodh-gayā), he slept in this shade, defeated, discredited, and abandoned; and there truth came to him.

Whilst he was musing the fire kindled: albeit a fire with more light than heat! On a clear still evening in the month of May, at the time known in India as "cowdust," when the air is golden and the heat of the day has begun to abate, he sat at the foot of the

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 104. [2] *Jātaka*, I, 67.

bo-tree[1] and, setting his teeth, once more made a resolution which afterwards he commended to his followers: "Though skin, nerves, and bone should waste away, and life-blood itself be dried up, here sit I till I attain Enlightenment." The sun had not set before victory was won, and the intuition which is the gospel of Gotama Buddha had dawned on his mind. "When this knowledge had arisen within me, my heart and mind were freed from the drug of lust, from the drug of rebirth, from the drug of ignorance. In me, thus freed, arose knowledge and freedom, and I knew that rebirth was at an end, and that the goal had been reached."[2] There broke from the lips of the seeker a song of victory which still stirs a deep chord in us, and is one of the great paeans of religious literature :

"Many a house of life
Hath held me—seeking ever him who wrought
These prisons of the senses, sorrow-fraught ;
Sore was my ceaseless strife !

But now,
Thou builder of this tabernacle—Thou !
I know thee ! Never shalt thou build again
These walls of pain,
Nor raise the roof-tree of deceits, nor lay
Fresh rafters on the clay ;
Broken thy house is, and the ridge-pole split :
Delusion fashioned it !
Safe pass I thence deliverance to obtain."[3]

Thus serene and joyful he sat, as the brilliant Indian moon rose, and the stars came out, and wood and river were bathed in silver light. His mental state is well described in the *Legend of the Burmese Buddha.*

"Mental exertion and labour were at an end. Truth in its effulgent beauty encompassed his mind and shed over it the purest rays. Placed in that luminous

[1] The *Ficus Religiosa*—an exquisite and much loved tree, at once majestic and delicate. According to another account it was at dawn that he became Buddha.

[2] *Mahā-saccaka Sutta : Discourses of Gotama*, E.T., I, 107.

[3] *Dhammapada*, 153-54. Sir Edwin Arnold's translation. The "builder" is of course *Tanhā*—craving, which builds and rebuilds "the house of life," *i.e.* the body.

centre, Phra[1] saw all beings entangled in the web of passions, tossed over the raging billows of the sea of renewed existences, whirling in the vortex of endless miseries, tormented incessantly and wounded to the quick by the sting of concupiscence, sunk into the dark abyss of ignorance, the wretched victims of an illusory, unsubstantial, and unreal world. He said then to himself: 'In all the worlds there is no one but me who knows how to break through the web of passions, to still the waves that waft beings from one state into another, to save them from the whirlpool of miseries, to put an end to concupiscence and break its sting, to dispel the mist of ignorance by the light of truth, and thereby lead them to the true state of Neibban.' Having thus given vent to the feelings of compassion that pressed on his benevolent heart, Phra, glancing over future events, delighted in contemplating the great number of beings who would avail themselves of his preachings, and labour to free themselves from the slavery of passions. He counted the multitudes who would enter the ways that lead to the deliverance, and would obtain the rewards to be enjoyed by those who will follow one of those ways."[2]

In a word, he had attained an ecstatic joy, the joy of victory after long struggle, of insight after long groping, and probably of altruism after long search for self-emancipation. "Insight arose, ignorance was dispelled; darkness was done away and light dawned. There sat I, strenuous, aglow, and master of myself."[3]

Gotama had become an *Arahat*,[4] seeing clearly, he believed, the way to put an end to rebirth, and conscious that his own release from rebirth had come.

[1] *Phra* is one of the Burmese titles for Gotama, who is called *Gaudama* in Burma.

[2] Pp. 98, 99.

[3] *Mahā-saccaka Sutta* in *Majjhima Nikāya*: a dialogue with the Jain controversialist Saccaka, which ends with a high tribute to Gotama's calmness and to the coherence and clearness of his argument as compared with rival preachers.

[4] *I.e.* one who had snapped the bonds of rebirth by lonely effort, attaining freedom from suffering and lust.

The content of religious experience is in large measure determined by upbringing and environment. The peace and coolness of that quiet scene became to him for ever associated with the great spiritual victory he had won ; and he had no doubt pondered deeply such current sayings of his people as the great prayer of the *Śatapatha Brāhmana*: "From darkness lead me to light: from death to life."

It is from this source that he seems to have derived the terms *Samana*, which describes the ascetic recluse-life he had been living, and *Arahat*, which describes the state of emancipation which he had now reached. He claims accordingly that he had passed from heat to coolness, from darkness to light, and from death to life, or immortality ; and the word *Amata*, ambrosia or deathlessness, became a synonym for *Nibbāna*. We cannot doubt the reality of this experience; for the joy and fervour of it sent him out on a life-long mission to his people, and the achievements of twenty-five centuries of Buddhism are based upon it.

With Gotama's interpretation of it it is not so easy to agree. What did he mean by *Nibbāna* ? No question, even in Buddhism, has been so variously answered, and Buddhists, even of the orthodox Theravāda tradition, of Burma and Ceylon, are to this day divided between three interpretations :[1]

1. Complete extinction of being ;
2. Extinction of the fire of lust, anger, and infatuation ;
3. A haven of bliss.

It is not the part of a biographer to deal fully with later developments of his hero's teachings: but it is clearly his duty to attempt a statement of what so central a doctrine seems to have meant to its author.

In the first place it must be emphasized that Gotama had his own doctrine of the nature of the self ; the unique thing in his psychology is the doctrine of *Anattā*. He considered the self to be a stream of

[1] For a fuller discussion see Appendix II.

consciousness (*Viññāna*) of which successive moments are related to one another, and yet differ from one another—"flashpoints of intelligence, cinema-films, thaumatrope figures welded into an apparent unity."[1] Thus, whilst he took over the current belief of his people in transmigration, he profoundly modified it, teaching that no such thing as the "soul" exists in this life, but that it and successive lives are part of a continuous stream; and that the individual who is "reborn" is therefore neither the same as the one who preceded him, nor is he another; he is in fact part of a stream whose direction is determined partly by past, partly by present activity, *Kamma*. *Kamma* is what determines rebirth: it is *Kamma* alone which "passes over." This teaching we shall have to consider in more detail later, but it must be grasped now if Gotama's doctrine of *Nibbāna* is to be understood.

In the second place it must be emphasized that even in this high and difficult region Gotama was "a son of fact" and a teacher of morals. When he spoke of *Nibbāna* he was trying to describe his own experience, and, being a moral teacher, he strove to describe it in ethical terms. What he intended to hold up as the goal was an experience which he himself had known, and of which the main characteristics were joy and peace. The dying out of *Tanhā*, craving—that was *Nibbāna*. His sense of the supreme value of this experience was the spur which drove him on to a life of unremitting labour; he was convinced that he had something to impart, for lack of which his people were perishing. He calls himself *Buddha*—the Enlightened; *Jina*—the Victor; and "*Vīra*"—the Hero; all in a moral sense; but his favourite name for himself henceforward is *Tathāgata*—he who has reached the goal;[2] and it was to this goal that he was always urging others, a goal only to be reached by moral effort, a *summum bonum* of which the characteristics are calmness, insight, and

[1] *Buddhist Psychology*, C. A. F. Rhys Davids, p. 14.
[2] Usually translated "Blessed One."

serene joy, the end of the solicitings of craving.[1] To the philosophical it might suffice to talk of the cessation of the flux of being; but this would not do for ordinary folk. "Coolness and rest"—these are the attractions which it offers to the laity. As the fierce Indian sun makes the tired body long for rest in some cool shade, so to the spirit tired by the long struggle of countless lives, and tormented by desire, *Nibbāna* offers an "alluring vision" of rest and coolness.

How far away this austere and simple ideal seems from the elaborate and difficult explanations of Buddhist scholasticism! Whether Gotama himself, forced into the arena by rival teachers, was obliged to use the weapons of metaphysic is not clear, but it seems certain that he cannot have left his teaching about *Nibbāna* quite so naïvely simple.

The early books certainly make it clear that it was only within certain well-defined limits that he indulged in metaphysical explanation. "One thing only do I teach, O monks, sorrow and the uprooting of sorrow": that is surely an authentic word of the teacher, which defines the limits of his purpose and is the central thing in his ethics. When the monk Malunkyāputta grumbled because he had not answered such questions as whether the good man continues to exist after death, and threatened to leave the *Saṅgha*, Gotama asked him mildly: "When you joined our company did I agree to elucidate such points, or did you ask for such elucidation?" and closed the discussion with the dry comment: "Anyone who should say, 'I will not lead the religious life under the Blessed One until he explains all these points'—well, he would die before he got that explanation."[2] In other words, he insists that his offer to men is to heal their moral disease, not to satisfy their

[1] *Mutti*, deliverance, and *Santi*, peace, are favourite synonyms for *Nibbāna*; and *Sihibhūto*, cooled, is a frequent epithet of the *Arahat*.

[2] *Majjhima Nikāya*, I, 426, quoted by de la Vallée Poussin in his Hibbert Lectures, *The Way to Nirvāna*, perhaps the best treatment of the whole subject yet published.

intellectual curiosity.[1] But within this circumscribed area he does seem to have developed a psychological doctrine of the self—the doctrine of *Anattā*—and to this extent to have satisfied men's curiosity about *Nibbāna*. When they pressed him as to to whether annihilation of greed, hatred, and lust carried with it annihilation of the self, he seems to have answered: "It depends upon what you mean by the self. If you mean some sort of 'soul' apart from the aggregates or *Khandhas*—well, no such thing exists in this life. If you mean the process of becoming, the stream of metal throbs with *Tanhā* and *Kamma* as its living core, then that is certainly annihilated in *Nibbāna*. *Sabbā anattā*; all things are without any underlying 'self' or 'soul.' How can that be annihilated which has never existed? It is *Tanhā* which gives the delusion of existence. How shall that not be annihilated which is the source of all our sorrow?" In other words, we cannot describe *Nibbāna* until we have mastered the true nature of the self; and there is no self in the usual sense! Even so we can describe *Nibbāna* best by negatives! It is the absence of evil: no less it is the absence of toil and heat and sorrow.[2] The first step is to get rid of wrong notions of self, and from this there will follow the conquest of egoism and the attainment of peace.[3]

Professor de la Vallée Poussin does not hesitate to say that Gotama taught one thing to the elect, and another thing to the simple. He maintains that to the elect he was frankly a rationalist teaching annihilation, and gives us the following instructive simile:

[1] On at least four points Gotama refused to dogmatize:

1. Is the world eternal?
2. Is it infinite?
3. Are body and soul identical?
4. Does the *Arahat* exist after death?

Buddhism became more and more a "middle way" between different metaphysical positions.

[2] Cf. Section XV of the *Dhammapada*.

[3] "I see no other single impediment, O monks, which so hinders mankind as the impediment of ignorance. . . . All misfortunes are rooted in ignorance and craving" (*Itivuttaka*, 14-40).

"A Buddha is a tiger, or rather a tigress. This tigress has to transport her cub, and accordingly takes it into her mouth; she holds it between her double set of teeth. But for the teeth, the cub would fall; but if the teeth were to be tightly closed, it would be crushed, In the same way a Buddha saves beings, transports them across the ocean of transmigration, by the paralled teaching of permanence and impermanence, Self and Selflessness, bliss of Nirvana, and annihilation in Nirvana. Permanence, Self, bliss of Nirvana: so many falsehoods. Useful falsehoods: but for them one would give up the religious training towards deliverance. Impermanence, selflessness, annihilation: so many truths. Dangerous truths like a serpent with a jewel in its hood: it requires a clever hand to take the jewel. In the same way few men are able to avoid being crushed by these sublime and terrible truths. Selflessness wrongly understood would lead to the wrong view that there is no survival; the doctrine of annihilation in Nirvana would originate despair or distrust.

"Therefore, Śākyamuni has been obscure on these points, and did not avoid some contradictions; and, when an inquirer was bold enough to ask for a plain answer, he plainly answered: 'You shall not know. *Cela ne vous regarde pas.*'"[1]

I am not prepared to go as far as this, for I believe that he remained to the end of his life an agnostic as to what full *Nibbāna* really meant, satisfied himself with his own moral experience, and convinced that to all his people there was an experience sufficiently vital and real to carry them on into that Beyond, whose nature it is impossible to describe except in negative terms, because it will be like nothing which we have known in this life. As a lover finds it impossible to describe the inwardness of his experience to any except one who has shared it, so Gotama must have striven in vain to make *Nibbāna* a living reality to the rank and file of his people. They

[1] *The Way to Nirvana*, p. 137.

for their part no doubt interpreted his teaching according to their own preconceptions and needs. That is the fate of all great teachers. Doubts as to the possibility of enlightening them were his first temptation. During a month of meditation which followed his great experience, the Devil assailed him in the form of depression and doubt, whether what he had so hardly won could be handed on to a world which would surely find these lessons both difficult and distasteful.[1] In technical language Gotama was tempted to remain a *Paccēkabuddha* (a Buddha for his own sake) rather than to become a *Sammāsambuddha* (universal Buddha, teaching all). Like Elijah he was overwhelmed with a sense of loneliness and dejection, but to him also there came a still small voice which nerved him for his high task.

The records tell us that Brahmā himself came to reassure him, and to rekindle his deep compassion for humanity.

> "Open, O wise one, the door of Eternity
> Preach, O thou stainless, the truth thou hast found.
> Thou who art sorrow-free, preach to the sorrowing,
> Standing aloft let them hear the glad sound!"

Certain it is that he braced himself for the task, and set out calm and convinced upon his great mission.

That Gotama thus "had compassion on the world" and came down from the "terraced heights of wisdom" to help those "toiling on the plans" is in itself enough to justify the *Bodhisattva* ideal which came gradually to supersede that of the *Arahat*.[2]

He sought first his old teachers at Rājagaha, but found that they were dead, and then walked 100 miles or more in a north-westerly direction to Benares in

[1] *Mahāvaggar* 1, 5, 2. For Māra's testimony to Gotama's faultless behaviour during the seven years that he dogged his footsteps, see *Sacred Books of the East*, XII, 71.

[2] This is the chief difference between the *Theravāda* or early and the *Mahāyāna* or later Buddhism. The latter maintains, not unreasonably, that Gotama was more *Bodhisattva* than *Arahat*, *i.e.* that altruism was stronger in him than self-culture.

order that his five disciples, purified by long asceticism, might have the first opportunity of learning the good news. On his way the Jain ascetic Upaka met him and thus addressed him: "Placid and serene is thy countenance. Who is thy teacher?" To whom he replied in these verses:

"All-conqueror I, knower of all,
From every soil and stain released,
Renouncing all, from craving ceased,
Self-taught; whom should I Master call?

That which I know I learned of none,
My fellow is not on the earth.
Of human or of heavenly birth
To equal me there is not one.

I truly have attained release,
The world's unequalled teacher I.
Alone enlightened perfectly,
I dwell in everlasting peace.

Now to Benares Town I press
To set the Truth-wheel whirling round.
In this blind world I go to sound
The throbbing drum of deathlessness."

"It may be so, friend, it may be so," said the sceptical Upaka, and went on his way. For he had been taught to look upon Vardhamana as the true *Jīna*, or conqueror, and this "Wheel" of Gotama's makes a big claim.[1]

After wandering from place to place, Gotama came to Benares. The five monks saw him coming and agreed among themselves to snub him as a renegade, but his radiant countenance and the serene dignity of his bearing won them over. He bade them no longer address him as "friend Gotama" but as *Tathāgata*, and he began to instruct them, giving to them the teaching known as *Dhammacakkappavatana Sutta*—"The rolling of the victorious wheel" or "The establishing of the Kingdom" as it is sometimes rendered by Western

[1] *Discourses of Gotama*, tr. Silācāra, II, 14. Other records make Upaka a Brahmin or an Ajīvika.

writers.[1] The "Discourse of the Middle Way" would better express its contents. We have only an abbreviated version of it, disappointing in its dry brevity, and hardly worthy of the occasion. It was a notable one! "History," it has been well said, "knows no chapters so beautiful and noble as those which tell of the coming of the great prophets and founders of religions to the men of their time. The story of Isaiah in Jerusalem, of Socrates in Athens, of Zoroaster on the uplands of Iran, of Gautama in the deer park of Benares—on all these immortal stories there lies a light beyond the light of time. They tell how great new thoughts of the eternal things came to men through the human medium of a noble personality, how like magnets they drew to the new teacher the flower of the noble youth of the time, who followed the Master—

> "'Learned his great langauge, caught his clear accents,
> Made him their pattern to live and to die.'

"They one and all tell also of the great fights of the spirit that followed the advent of the new teacher. 'All things are at odds,' said Emerson, 'when God lets a new thinker loose upon the planet.'"[2] Such was Gotama, and it is clear, in spite of the meagre reports, that he had a new and stirring message to deliver, and that it constrained and uplifted him. It was in this exalted mood that he preached his first "sermon."

It was clearly born of his own heroic experience, and in it he sets forth his religion as a Golden Mean. As a lyre gives the right tone only if the string is stretched neither too much nor too little, so is it with the life of man. So he taught them later, when his

[1] "To set rolling the royal chariot wheel of a universal empire of truth and righteousness" is Dr. Rhys Davids' rendering (*Buddhism*, p. 45). In his Hibbert Lectures Dr. Davids has shown very convincingly that Gotama fulfilled the *Chakkavatti* ideal, yet transcended and sublimated it, much as Jesus did that of the Messiah.

[2] D. S. Cairns, *The Reasonableness of the Christian Faith*, p. 167.

mind had had time to work upon his experience. Now he gave them the following key to truth: "Two extremes are there, O brethren, which the recluse must avoid—the life of passion and of sensuality on the one hand, a low and pagan way, ignoble and profiting nothing, and on the other hand self-tortures, which is also ignoble and unprofitable, as well as very painful. The path which I have discovered is a path which opens the eyes, gives understanding and leads to peace, to *Nibbāna*. It is the Noble Eight-Fold Path." He then goes on to tell them of the Four Noble Truths, in which he traces the origin of suffering to craving for such things as gratification of the senses or for the joys of life after death, or for prosperity in this world; and shows how suffering can only be put away if such craving is first killed out. It is to attain this goal that "noble youth leave home and go forth to the homeless life, and the way to it is the Middle Path," *i.e.* the "Noble Eight-Fold Path," Right Views, Right Aspirations, Right Speech, Right Conduct, Right Means of Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindedness, and Right Rapture.

Of this sermon Professor Rhys Davids has written: "There is not a word about God or the soul, not a word about the Buddha. It seems simple, almost jejune; so thin and weak that one wonders how it can have formed the foundation for a system so mighty in its historical results. But the simple words are pregnant with meaning. Their implication was clear enough to the hearers to whom they are addressed."[1]

Yet we cannot but wish that some fuller record had come down to us. Though these words came out of the heart of the great experience, and therefore, meagre as they are, carried conviction to the five who had suffered all things with him, yet one cannot doubt that Gotama spoke more fully and with a wealth of illustration and comment which has not been preserved. And this is true of many of his discourses which are reported to

[1] *Early Buddhism*, p. 53.

have had an immediate response in the "conversion" of his hearers. "Religion is caught rather than taught" and it was often the contagion of his own joy rather than the substance of his teaching which won their allegiance.

We are to picture him calm and serene, with a note of triumph and joy which was its own best apologetic. Countless statues of him, conventionalised no doubt, show him standing or seated thus, teaching with the certainty and precision of a modern teacher of science, and occasionally one is to be found with the quizzical smile of a Socrates. To those who argued he proved a remorseless antagonist, but most capitulated without a struggle, charmed by his winsomeness and convinced by his logic, or more often by his analogies.

His great discovery seems to be an application of the current medical theory of his day in the moral sphere, and it carried immediate conviction. In fact it seems so simple as to be almost axiomatic: if there is suffering there is a cause for it; to get at the disease we must get at its cause. Suffering is caused by craving of a wrong sort: to get rid of this craving we must busy ourselves with right moral conduct.

The second "sermon" is said to have been delivered four days later, to the same five ascetics, and is called "The *Anattā-lakkhana Sutta*."[1] It took them a stage further: and they became *Arahats*, first *Kondaña*, and later the other four. This sermon sets out to combat the "soul" theories of the ordinary man. Men desire wrongly because they think wrongly. The first stage in the Path is right thinking. Gotama shows how emancipation comes through right thinking; let them apply to the "soul" or "self" a process of analysis: they will find that it is made up of so many qualities and characteristics, so many sensations and preceptions, and therefore has no real being that we should desire to be reborn. "Think you, O monks, that form is permanent or transitory, or that sensation, perception, is per-

[1] *Vinaya*, I, 14; *Samyutta Nikāya*, III, 66.

manent or transitory ?" "They are transitory," replied the five. "And of that which is transitory and evil, and liable to change can it be said, 'This is myself, my soul?'" "Nay, truly it cannot be said," the five argued. In this way he produces in his disciples a feeling of disgust or contempt. "What is the self but a bundle of attributes ?" He replaces the emotion of desire for life by the emotion of disgust. This method was carried to a fine art as the system developed, until meditation in graveyards and upon skeletons by the wayside is recommended as a ready means of securing such detachment and aloofness from the things of sense as will lead on to freedom.

Is it not the mere skeleton of a sermon which has come down to us? But the "third sermon," preached to the lay community on a mountain-side near Gayā, is more like preaching, and less like a classroom lecture; possibly because the audience now consisted of certain young nobles, and others, mostly the instructed "monks with matted hair," or Jātilas, fire-worshippers, who had added themselves to his company, and needed different handling. The occasion of it was a conflagration which broke out in the jungles as the teacher was seated with his disciples "on the Elephant Rock near Gayā, with the beautiful valley of Rājagaha stretched out before them."[1] It is known as the "Fire Sermon," *Aditta-pariyāya Sutta*, and is one the most typical and famous of Buddhist utterances: "All things, O mendicants, are aflame, the eye is aflame, forms are aflame, impressions received by the eye are aflame; and all sensations that arise from these impressions received through the eye are aflame. And what is the flame ? It is the flame of lust, of anger, and of infatuation; birth, old age, death, mourning, and despair; all are set on fire with this flame."

So he goes on, taking the other sense organs in turn and including the mind amongst them, showing that all the

[1] *Mahāvagga*, I, 21. (For the full text of the sermon see Warren, *Buddhism in Translations*, pp. 351-53.)

world is a conflagration, till he leads his disciples to disgust for sense impressions and to detachment from desire. "So is the disciple shorn of desire, so is he freed, and so he knows that he is free; he knows that the process of becoming is at an end, that he has attained to the pure life, that he has done what had to be done, and has put off mortality for ever."[1]

This and similar preaching was so successful that the number of *Arahats* grew very rapidly. Not all were like the teacher and the five ascetics who after long striving found release: a party of young nobles who were very worldly were converted *en bloc* as they were sporting in the forest, and soon there were sixty *Arahats*.

These after a period of instruction Gotama sent out on a preaching tour: "Go forth," he said, "on a journey that shall be for the good of many and for their happiness. Go forth in compassion towards the world for the weal of gods and men. Go forth in pairs, but to each his own work. Teach the beneficent Law; reveal the holy life to men blinded with the dust of desire. They perish for lack of knowledge. Teach them the Law."[2]

We may question this sending of men so recently converted. But Gotama seems to have realised that the young convert needs some exercise of the will, and that there is no surer way of testing one's beliefs than by attempting to teach them to simple folk. And the more important part of their message was a call to righteous living which it needed no subtlety of mind nor any training in metaphysic to understand. If the masses could not understand *Nibbāna*, they could at any rate set out upon the Eight-Fold Path. And who should teach them so appealingly as fellow-voyagers who believed that they themselves had found both chart and compass?

[1] Rhys Davids, *Buddhism*, p. 59. Mrs. Rhys Davids prefers to translate *Tanhā* by "craving"; I agree.

[2] *Samyutta Nikāya*, I, 105. In *Sacred Books of the East*, XIII, 112, it is stated that they were sent out "one by one."

III

GOTAMA AT THE HEIGHT OF HIS POWER

The fragrance of the righteous travels far and wide.
—Dhammapada 54.

"*His progress was a triumph of gladness.*"
—E. W. Hopkins.

THAT the teaching of the first Buddhist missionaries was eagerly welcomed seems clear; for they were filled with joy and conviction, and the times were fully ripe for the moral teaching that they had to give. It has been contended that it was chiefly amongst the nobility that this teaching found acceptance, and the reason has been suggested that the warriors and *rājas* of the day gave the new religion a ready hearing because it was set up in opposition to the Brahmins, and because they recognised in Gotama one of themselves. "He spoke," says Hopkins, "to glad hearers, who heard repeated loudly now as a religious truth what often they had said despitefully to themselves in private":[1] and Professor Oldenberg finds in early Buddhism a decided predilection for the aristocracy.[2]

No doubt these were elements in the success of the new religion, but it was at heart a democratic movement and it was not essentially anti-Brahmin; into the *Saṅgha* Brahmins, kings, warriors, cultivators, and men and women of low caste, and of no caste, were equally welcomed.[3] Preaching was in the vernaculars of Ma-

[1] Hopkins, *Religions of India*, p. 304.
[2] Oldenberg, *Buddha*, E.T., p. 157.
[3] *Mahāvagga*, I, 15.

gadha and Kosala, and lay folk could understand much of it. The two first lay disciples were Tapussa and Bhallika, merchants; and Upāli, a barber of the court of the Śākyas, was very early ordained and attained a position of leadership in the *Saṅgha*. He is indeed credited with the main share in compiling the *Vinaya* or code of discipline for the new order.

Amongst the first converts were three brothers Kāsyapa,[1] fire-worshippers or Jātilas, and two others destined to become leaders: Sāriputta and Moggallāna, both Brahmins, whilst Ānanda and Devadatta were both of the warrior caste; so that even in its inner circle the *Saṅgha* was fairly representative. The fact that Gotama himself promoted Sāriputta and Moggallāna to positions of leadership suggests how far he was from desiring to organise an anti-Brahmin campaign. Yet there is no question about the frankness with which he dissected and ridiculed Brahmin claims to supremacy.

The traditional story of the conversion of these two friends seems probable enough. They were wandering ascetics, disciples of Sañjaya, and had promised one another that he who should first find salvation (*Amata* or Ambrosia) would tell the other. One day Sāriputta saw Asajji, one of Gotama's first five disciples, on his begging ground; struck by his noble and calm bearing, he asked him who was his teacher, and what he taught. "There is a great sage, a son of the Śākyas, who has gone forth to the homeless life; he is my teacher, and it is his doctrine I profess," said Asajji, and quoted this verse:

> "That all things from a cause are sprung
> This hath the Teacher shown:
> How each shall to its ending come
> This too he hath made known."

On hearing this Sāriputta attained "to the pure eye for the truth" or, in other words, was converted to the Buddhist faith! That the universe is orderly and that

[1] Cf. *Majjhima Nikāya*, *Assalāyana Sutta* and *Tevijja Sutta* of *Dīgha Nikāya*, both quoted in full by Dr. T. Rhys Davids, *Hibbert Lectures*, II.

there is a key to its workings—this is to many minds a gospel indeed. He hurried off to Moggallāna, told him that he had found Ambrosia, and they were both admitted to the Order.[1] About a week afterwards Moggallāna dozed when he should have been meditating, and Gotama drily reminded him that "Torpor is not the same as Aryan silence."[2] But the two friends made rapid progress: they became pillars of the *Saṅgha*; and some parts of the *Abhidhamma*, the scholastic section of the Buddhist books, are, I think unjustly, attributed to them.[3]

Another great convert of these early days was Mahā Kassapa, who, like his master, had given up a beautiful wife and a position of wealth and influence to seek a way of salvation; it is he who is recorded to have called the first Buddhist Council together after Gotama's death, and is the reputed author of this poem in praise of the master [and of himself]:

"In the whole of Buddha's following,
Saving alone the mighty Master's self,
I stand the foremost in ascetic ways:
No man doth practise them so far as I.
The Master hath my fealty and love,
And all the Buddha's ordinance is done.
Low have I laid the heavy load I bore,
Cause for rebirth is found in me no more.
For never thought for raiment, nor for food,
Nor where to rest doth the great mind affect,
Immeasurable, of our Gotama.

No more than spotless lotus-blossom takes
A mark from water; to self-sacrifice
Continually prone, he from the sphere
Threefold of new becoming is detached.
The neck of him is like the fourfold tower
Of mindfulness set np; yea, the great Seer
Hath faith and confidence for hands; above,
The brow of him is insight; nobly wise,
He ever walketh in cool blessedness."[4]

[1] *Mahāvagga*, I, 23 (*Sacred Books of the East*, XIII, 144, 145).

[2] *Theragāthā*, CCLXIII.

[3] And to Sāriputta is attributed the *Niddesa* or commentary on the *Sutta Nipāta*.

[4] Mrs. Rhys Davids, *Songs of the Brethren*, pp. 367, 368 (*Theragāthā*, CCLXI).

In this tribute to Gotama we note the impression which he made upon his contemporaries; not only is his asceticism praised, and his noble wisdom and great powers of mind, but Kassapa attributes to him faith, and confesses to a personal loyalty and devotion which the Master kindled in him. We cannot doubt that it was this, even more than his teaching, which nerved these early followers and gave them the sense of joy and of well-being which rings through their verses. That Kassapa went to extremes of asceticism seems clear: there is another song of his which is perhaps the most gruesome thing in all religious literature, and which reveals the revolting length to which Buddhist detachment could go in those early days of enthusiasm:

> "Down from my mountain lodge I came one day
> And made my round for alms about the streets.
> A leper there I saw eating his meal
> (And as was meet, that he might have a chance),
> In (silent) courtesy I halted at his side.
> He with his hand all leprous and diseased
> Put in my bowl a morsel; as he threw,
> A finger mortifying, broke and fell.
> Leaning against a wall I ate my share,
> Nor at the time nor after felt disgust.
> For only he who taketh as they come
> The scraps of food, medicine from excrement,
> The couch beneath the tree, the patchwork robe,
> Stands as a man in north, south, east, or west."[1]

Such was Kassapa; and we shall see later what were the qualities for which each of the other leaders of the *Saṅgha* was most honoured. But there were many other early converts not so eminent: there was, for instance, Yasa, a young noble, who very early in his ministry came to Gotama and became an *Arahat*, whilst his father, mother, and wife became lay adherents. The *Mahāvagga* tells us that Yasa was brought up in great luxury; and that, disgusted at the sight of the sleeping women of the harem, he came to Gotama crying: "Alas! What sorrow! What danger!" To him Gotama first talked about the merit obtained by

[1] *Songs of the Brethren*, p. 362 (*Theragāthā*, CCLXI).

almsgiving, the beauties of morality, heaven, the evils of vanity, and the dust of desire. When he saw that the mind of the noble youth was prepared, he preached the more essentially Buddhistic doctrine of suffering, its cause, and the way to escape. And because Yasa was fit for such instruction, we are told that, "as a clean cloth absorbs the dye," he absorbed the teaching that whatsoever is subject to birth is also subject to death.

Had he been less prepared, Gotama would have been content to lead him much more gradually from the elements to the arcana of his teaching. It is quite clear that to the masses he contented himself with preaching a simple morality like that embodied in the edicts of Asoka, and that only as individuals showed themselves ready for the more difficult teaching did he impart it. "First study the person," says a Buddhist proverb of Japan, "then teach the Law."

Gotama's family were also amongst the earliest converts.

During these six long years of painful search and final victory, reports had reached the old Chief at Kapilavatthu. Impatient to see his son, he sent messengers to him at Rājagaha. One after another they came under the spell of Gotama, and forgot their messages in the greatness of their enthusiasm for the new teacher; but at last Kāludayin, a former playmate of Gotama and now Minister of State, was sent to urge his return. On the full-moon day of Phalgun he came, and urged that, in this perfect weather, when "the trees are crimson with blossom and the hour big with hope," Gotama should return.[1] He prevailed; and in the early spring the company set out for Kapilavatthu, a journey of 400 miles, which they accomplished by slow stages. Travelling about seven miles a day, and enjoying the beauty of the fresh fields and flowering groves, they came to the little city.

The "Legend of the Burmese Buddha" describes the beauty of the Indian springtide, a delightful time for

[1] *Theragāthā*, CCXXXIII (*Songs of the Brethren*, p. 249).

one of the pilgrimage-picnics dear to the Indian heart, and puts into the mouth of Kāludayin these words:

"The cold season is over, the warm season has just begun: this is now the proper time to travel through the country; nature wears a green aspect; the trees and the forests are in full blossom; the roads are lined to right and left with trees loaded with fragrant blossoms and delicious fruits; the peacock proudly expands his magnificent tail; birds of every description fill the air with their ravishing and melodious singing; at this season heat and cold are equally temperate, and nature is scattering profusely these choicest gifts."[1]

Men, women, and children came out from the city to greet the wanderer and found him resting in a grove. Very tenderly, but very firmly, he dealt with his old father, who complained that this mendicant life was no life for the son of an illustrious line; far different was the custom of kings. "This," said Gotama, "is the custom of the Buddhas, and to their lineage do I belong"; and in a verse reminded his father that the good man wins happiness hereafter as well as in this life.[2] Eventually Suddhōdana was convinced, and became a lay-adherent. After supper the women of the household came and paid him homage, except the Princess Yasodharā, who felt, not unreasonably, that it was for the wanderer to seek her out. We are told that, accompanied by Sāriputta and Moggallāna, he went in to find her and she, running to meet him, laid her head upon his feet. Yet there was some bitterness in her heart, and she is said to have asked passionately for the inheritance of the little Rāhula. "I will give him a more excellent inheritance," said the ascetic and bade Moggallāna shave his head, and admit him to the *Saṅgha*.[3] After this they set out again for Rājagaha.

[1] P. 170.

[2] *Dhp*. 168.

[3] *Sacred Books of the East*, XIII, 208, 209. The admission of children led to serious misunderstandings at a later date, and it is laid down in the *Vinaya* that it was not to continue, except with the full sanction of the boy's parents (cf. *Mahāvagga*, I, 48).

On the way, in the mango grove of Anupiya, he met a number of the Śākya princes, amongst them Ānanda, Anuruddha, and Devadatta, his cousins, all of whom were destined to play a great part in his life; either then or later they were all admitted to the *Saṅgha*.

Arriving at Rājagaha, the teacher was greeted by Anāthapindika, merchant of Sāvatthi, with a munificent gift of a monastery of eighty cells and other residences with terraces and baths, and accepted his invitation to Sāvatthi. There was a "fragrance chamber" for Gotama himself, and here he took up his abode. In accepting this or a similar gift Gotama is said to have uttered the following thanksgiving:[1]

"Here cold and heat no sojourn make;
Here ravenous beasts no entry find,
Nor stinging fly, nor creeping snake,
Winter's cold rain nor summer's scorching wind.

Here is a place to concentrate
The thoughts, to dwell serene, apart,
Where men of insight meditate—
Such habitations charm the Sage's heart!

These are choice gifts: therefore, ye wise,
Having your own best weal in mind,
Let sacred edifices rise
To lodge the holy Brethren of mankind.

Raiment and fitting drink and food
And ample bedding now prepare!
These offer to the Brotherhood;
Let them in turn the Righteous Law declare.

So shall your misery remove,
And ye be purged of every stain,
Goodness and Truth ye'll learn to love,
And, loving, shall the longed-for Goal attain!"

Lay patrons such as Anāthapindika played a great part in the spread of the Order. Another was the Lady

Later the ordination of any candidate under twenty years of age was forbidden (*Ibid.*, I, 49) for it did not tend to "convert the unconverted or to augment the number" (or the prestige "of the converted").

[1] *The Heart of Buddhism*, p. 31. (Translated from *Culla-vagga*, VI,[1]).

Visākha, who also dwelt at Sāvatthi, and who seems to have been formerly a disciple of the Naked Sect of Jains, but who now gave the great monastery of Pubbarāma to the *Saṅgha.* The courtesan Ambapālī[1] was also a generous patroness. Her town was Vesālī; and we find a noble emulation between the chief towns of the district for the honour of lodging the monks.

The next three rainy seasons they spent in the Bamboo Grove at Rājagaha, and we are told that in the fifth season Gotama, then at Vesālī, mediated between the Śākyas and the Koliyas, to both of whose chief families he was related, in a dispute over the waters of the river Rohinī, and spoke to them various parables proving that hatred does but breed hatred, and that feuds perpetuate themselves—an elementary truth not yet learned, it would seem, by the statesmen of the great Christian nations:

"Bad folk by wrath are overthrown,
As when an avalanche comes down."

Thus war was averted. So greatly was Gotama already esteemed in the council chambers of kings; so convincing was the sweet reasonableness of his teaching!

About this time it seems that women were first admitted to the Order. On the death of Suddhōdana, his wife, the lady Pājāpatī came with the wives of other Śākya chiefs and urged that they should not be left to mourn alone, but should be admitted to the Order. This request seems to have puzzled Gotama, who refused it three times, for he held the ideas of women which were usual in the India of his day.[2] But the ladies were importunate; they cut off their hair, put on the yellow robe, took begging bowls, and set out to meet him; and so, with bleeding feet, and travel-stained,

[1] *Sacred Books of the East*, XVII, p. 105. This courtesan seems to have wielded great influence. She has been compared to Madame Pompadour.

[2] Women are likened in the *Itivuttaka* or Logia of Gotama to crocodiles and demons who wait for the swimmer in the stream of life.

these high-born women came to Vesālī. The first to meet them was Ānanda, whose wife was probably amongst them, and he besought Gotama to admit them to the *Saṅgha*. Again he refused, till Ānanda, with more intelligence than usual, asked him whether there was any spiritual defect in women to prevent their attaining even to the Goal, *Nibbāna*. Gotama was too honest to fence with this question, but he gave way with sorrow and misgivings. "Let them be subject and subordinate to the brethren," he commanded. "Even so their admission means that the Good Law shall not endure for a thousand years, but only for five hundred. For as when mildew falls upon a field of rice that field is doomed, even so when women leave the household life and join an order, that order will not long endure. Yet as water is held up by a strong dyke, so have I established a barrier of regulations which are not to be transgressed."[1]

In taking this step, Gotama knew he was taking risks, yet it seemed inevitable; and was on the whole well justified by events: though the nuns proved fretful at times and though there were instances of immoral conduct, yet some of them such as Dhammadinnā, Sukhā, and Khemā did nobly, reaching equal eminence with the great monks. Thus we find the lady Khemā teaching the king of Kosala and winning Gotama's approval for her clear and accurate handling of the vexed question, "Does the Blessed One, having entered *Nibbāna*, still exist?"[2]

Like St. Francis of Assisi, Gotama had now two Orders of "religious" men and women, giving their whole attention to the Good Law; and a third Order of lay people, including kings and warriors, who, whilst carrying on their ordinary duties, kept a simplified rule of life, and gave of their substance and energy to the

[1] *Cullavagga*, X, 16. Is the prophecy contained in these words due to a momentary fit of depression in the serene and optimistic Gotama, or is it the work of a later hand, writing at a time when the "good law" was already in decline?

[2] Oldenberg, *Buddha*, E.T., pp. 278-80.

spreading of the faith. And in return it seems clear that the *Saṅgha* gave them sound and practical advice ; thus at Vesālī Gotama seems to have taught the Vajjians that it is right conduct that exalts a people ; so long as they meet in conference and dwell in concord, so long as they respect woman, above all so long as they support and protect the *Saṅgha*, so long will they prosper, and go forward. But like a Hebrew prophet he warns them of impending disaster.[1] They were not ungrateful, but they allowed dissension to spring up amongst them, and soon afterwards Ajātasattu conquered them and destroyed their city.

It is not to be supposed that all went smoothly with the new teaching ; or that Gotama's serene course had no dark moments. In the first place the people of Magadha seem to have complained bitterly that he was making orphans and widows of them all : "He causes fathers to beget no children ; and wives to become widows ; and families to become extinct."[2]

Besides such criticism and opposition from without, Gotama was clearly subject to temptations from within, which the books naïvely attribute to Māra, the Prince of Darkness and Death. After his illumination, as we have seen, came temptations to succumb to a cynical estimate of mankind and to keep his discovery to himself.

Later came other insidious suggestions ; once, for example, while he was meditating alone in a hut on the Himālayas, the thought came to him : "How much good the truly righteous king might do, ruling in peace, inflicting no pain, seeing that no man oppress his neighbour." Hotfoot upon this thought came Māra, who reminded him of his miraculous power by which he might turn all the Himālayas into gold, but to him Gotama, now completely master of himself, replied : "And pray what profit would it be to the sage to possess a mountain of gold ?"[3] Yet these two temptations, to

[1] *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*.
[2] *Mahāvagga*, I, 24 (*Sacred Books of the East*, XIII, 150).
[3] *Samyutta Nikāya*, I.

become a great ruler and to use miracle in setting up a "theocracy without a God," were no doubt very real; they resemble the temptations which assailed Jesus of Nazareth at the beginning of His public ministry, and it must have needed great heroism in each case to put them away. May we not find in the temptation of Gotama a recurrence of early ambitions to become a *Chakkavatti*, ambitions now refined and spiritualized? And other temptations, too, he must have known—above all, the yearning to leave a contrary and critical world to roll on to perdition!

There were disputes again, even within the *Saṅgha*; and outside it there were many rival teachers, who did not look favourably upon the growing enthusiasm for the new religion, and some of whom even resorted to gross attacks upon Gotama's moral character.[1] Not unnaturally, Sañjaya, the former teacher of Sāriputta and Moggallāna, resented their defection. Another rival sect whom Gotama strongly condemned were the Ājīvikas, who taught a determinism which seems to have led directly to immoral conduct; their chief, Makkhali Gosāla, he described as a "bad man," who would catch his disciples like fish in order to destroy them.[2] Another sect was that of Mahāvīra Vardhamana, known as the Jains, a sect which had many points of resemblance with his own teaching, but whose members were much more ascetic and believed in the reality of the soul and in its personal identity after death. Gotama's attitude to these rival sects is summed up in the *Majjhima Nikāya*, where he divides ascetics outside his own following into eight classes, four of which are "incontinent," amongst these being the Ājīvikas, whilst four are "unsatisfying," amongst these

[1] For the quaint story of the girl Ciñcā see *The Heart of Buddhism*, pp. 155, 156.

[2] In the *Anguttara Nikāya* Gotama calls the doctrine of Makkhali the "worst of doctrines": it is like the hair shirt its author wore—rough to the touch, unpleasant to the smell! An account of his teaching is given in *Dialogues of the Buddha*, I, 71.

being the Jains.[1] And though Gotama bade his followers show no anger if these rival teachers attacked them, yet he made it very clear that he strongly disapproved of some and despised others. We are told that these rival teachers, finding no support in Magadha, whose king, Bimbisāra, befriended the Buddhist *Saṅgha* (seeing in its teaching of unity a splendid aid to statecraft), went off to Kosala, hoping to win the patronage of its king, the Pasenādi Agnidatta,[2] but he too eventually joined Gotama.

This Pasenādi has a section of the *Samyutta Nikāya* devoted to him, and is one of the most interesting figures of Gotama's day.

They seem to have met first quite early in Gotama's ministry on the occasion of a great animal sacrifice, when the compassion of the teacher was deeply stirred, and he spoke out as the prophet of a new righteousness and the priest of a new and more seemly sacrifice. And all his days he was a champion of "our little brothers" whom men so thoughtlessly and wantonly torture and slay.

"Now at this time a great sacrifice was arranged to be held for the king, the Kosalan Pasenādi. Five hundred bulls, five hundred bullocks, and as many heifers, goats, and rams were led to the pillar to be sacrificed, and then the slaves and menials and craftsmen, hectored about by blows and by fear, made the preparations with tearful faces weeping.

"Now a number of almsmen, having risen early and dressed and taken bowl and robe, entered Sāvatthi for alms. . . . And after their return they sought the presence of the Exalted One and told him of the preparations for the sacrifice.

[1] In the *Brahmajāla Sutta* of *Dīgha Nikāya* Gotama enumerates sixty-two current philosophies and says that all who attempt in those ways to reconstruct the past or to decide the future are "like fish caught in a net. However much they plunge and flounder, they are the more entangled" (*Dialogues,* I, 319).

[2] *Pasenādi* seems to have been a title, not a name.

"Then the Exalted One, understanding the matter, uttered in that hour these verses:

"'The sacrifices called "the Horse," the Man,
The Peg-thrown Site, the Drink of Victory,
The Bolts Withdrawn, and all the mighty fuss:—
These are not rites that bring a rich result.
Where divers goats and sheep and kine are slain.
Never to such a rite as that repair
The noble seers who walk the perfect way.
But rites where is no bustle nor no fuss,
Are offerings meet, bequests perpetual,
Where never goats and sheep and kine are slain.
To such a sacrifice as this repair
The noble seers who walk the perfect way.
These are the rites entailing great results.
These to the celebrant are blest, not cursed.
Th' oblation runneth o'er; the gods are pleased.'"[1]

Like Samuel he insisted that the offering of righteousness (*dhamma puja*) is better than the offering of material sacrifice (*amisa puja*).

At another time Gotama was distressed at the story of captives taken in one of Agnidatta's wars, and at the bonds which still held the king himself captive: the love of self and of the world.

The story of the king's conversion is worth quoting in full.

"Thus have I heard: 'The Exalted One was once staying near Sāvatthi, at the Jeta Grove in Anāthapindika's Park. Now the king, the Kosalan Pasenādi, came into the presence of the Exalted One, and after exchanging greetings with him and compliments of friendship and courtesy, sat down at one side. So seated he said to the Exalted One:

"'Does Master Gotama also make no claim to be perfectly and supremely enlightened?' 'If there be any one, sire, to whom enlightenment might rightly be

[1] *Samyutta Nikāya*, in Mrs. Rhys Davids' *The Book of the Kindred Sayings*, pp. 102, 103. Gotama does not seem to have condemned sacrifice in itself; but "better even than a bloodless sacrifice is liberality . . . and the highest sacrifice of all is to enter *Nibbāna*, saying 'I return no more to earth'" (*Kutadanta Sutta*, *Dīgha Nikāya*, 143).

attributed, it is I. I verily, sire, am perfectly and supremely enlightened.'

"'But Master Gotama, there are recluses and Brahmins who also, like yourself, have each their order of disciples, their attendant followers, who are teachers of disciples, well-known and reputed theorisers, highly esteemed by the people—I mean Purāna-Kassapa, Makkhali of the Cowstall, the Nigantha Nata's son,[1] Sañjaya Belatthi's son, Kaccāyana of the Pakudhas, Ajita of the Hairblanket. Now they, when I have asked this same question of them, have not laid claim to perfect and supreme enlightenment. How can this be? For (as compared with them) Master Gotama is young in years, and is a novice in the life of religion.'

"'There are four young creatures, who are not to be disregarded or despised, because they are youthful. What are the four? A noble prince, a snake, a fire, an almsman (*bhikkhu*). Yea, sire, these four young creatures are not to be disregarded or despised because they are youthful.

"'Hence with these four—the serpent and the fire,
The prince of high estate, the saintly friar—
Let the wise man, his own good-will in sight,
Conduct himself as seemly is and right.'

"When these things had been said, King Pasenādi, the Kosalan, spoke thus to the Exalted One:

"'Most excellent, Lord, most excellent! Just as if a man were to set up that which has been thrown down, or were to reveal that which is hidden away, or were to point out the right road to him who has gone astray, or were to bring a lamp into the darkness so that those who have eyes could see external forms—even so, Lord, has the truth been made known to me in many a figure by the Exalted One. I, even I, Lord, betake myself to the Exalted One as my refuge, to the Norm and to the Order. May the Exalted One accept me as a follower,

[1] Nataputta was the founder of the Jain Sect, whose members call him both *Jina* (conqueror) and *Buddha*.

as one who from this day forth as long as life endures has taken his refuge therein.' "[1]

So were many lesser folk converted: not so much by argument as by good-humoured analogy or the *argumentum ad hominem*. "You are yourself young, O King," says Gotama in effect to the Pasenādi, "why despise me for my youth?" And not a word more was needed—no refutation of the other teachers, no vindication of his own *Dhamma*, but only a serene, authoritative claim, politely wrapped up in a compliment! This is the way to deal with kings. But with philosophers and rival teachers he took another line.

King Agnidatta became the life-long friend and supporter of the *Saṅgha* and, like the great Asoka after him, seems to have been chastened by contact with them till he gave up animal sacrifices, and even spared his enemy Ajātasattu, after defeating him in battle. "Although," he reflected, "this king injures me who have done him no wrong, yet he is my nephew. What if I take away his army and leave him his life?" And we find the Buddhist chronicler avowing "That the King of Kosala, Pasenādi, is a friend and an intimate, yea, an active promoter of all that is good." Whilst of Ajātasattu we read that "He is the friend and intimate of all evil, and an active associate."

But we are anticipating. The sinister plots of Ajātasattu and Devadatta belong to the story of Gotama's old age, and must be told in a later chapter.

During the greater part of his lifetime it was Bimbisāra who ruled in Magadha; his Queen Khemā was converted in spite of herself in the sixth year of Gotama's ministry; and his dates are known with a fair measure of certainty—from 543 to 491 B.C. Their son Ajātasattu comes on the scene when Gotama is about seventy years old.

The chronology of Gotama's ministry up to the age of fifty has been carefully, if not very convincingly,

[1] *Samyutta Nikāya*, in Mrs. Rhys Davids' *The Book of the Kindred Sayings*, p. 95.

worked out in some of the biographies, such as that translated by Bishop Bigandet under the title, *The Life or Legend of Gaudama*, and for want of more certain knowledge the general sequence of events may be accepted as there arranged. But it is monkish chronology for the most part, concerned with such things as when the *Saṅgha* went into retreat, and even this skeleton fails us for the period of his life between the ages of fifty and seventy, which are, as the Bishop says, "an almost complete blank."

It seems as if a late editor had collected all the available material and used it up too quickly! It is certain that the whole story has been edited and re-edited by monks, until in Japan we have a complete chronology worked out; each year being remembered by some discourse, and each era concerned with a very definite development of doctrine, until at the end of his life Gotama reveals a fully worked out *Mahāyāna* gospel in the famous *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka*! More scientific biography must select from the available matter what is best calculated to give a true impression of its hero, and what is least improbable and fabulous. But until the whole of the Buddhist works are accessible to us and until much more textual criticism has been done, biography in the strictest sense is not possible.

IV

THE DAILY LIFE OF GOTAMA AND HIS DISCIPLES

In bliss we dwell amongst men of hatred, hating none.—Dhammapada 197.

SMILED on by kings and growing rapidly in numbers and in power, the *Saṅgha* had to be organised. This was a gradual process, for Gotama seems to have realised the value of a discipline which sprang out of actual experience. In the very early days when there were only six *Arahats*, they seem to have wandered from place to place at all seasons of the year; but this led to criticism, for in the wet weather the land teems with insect life, and the young crops are also easily damaged! So the people complained, say the *Mahāvagga*,[1] and reminded them that birds go to their nests and even "heretics" have a "close season." Gotama accordingly, following a practice already recognized in other "Orders," instituted the Buddhist *Vassa* or "Lent," which has ever since been observed.

Towards the end of May or the beginning of June (the month of Āshāḍha), the Indian sky is heavy with black clouds, and man's eyes turn longingly towards them as they pile up upon the horizon, now lit by flashes of lightning, now hanging dark and big with rain.[2] Then at last they break, and a great sigh of thanksgiving seems to go up from the weary land.

[1] *Mahāvagga*, III (*Sacred Books of the East*, XIII, 298, 299).

[2] The breaking of the rains varies—in the north-west it is as late as the end of June; so the *Mahāvagga* gives alternate dates, either the day after the full moon of Āshāḍha, or a month later, for the beginning of *Vassa*.

During this season we are to imagine Gotama and his followers leading the "strenuous life of meditation" in quiet places like the Vulture Peak of the Bamboo Grove at Rājagaha, or in the garden given to them by Anāthapindika at Sāvatthi. In the "Songs of the Buddhist Brethren" we read also of monks and nuns in solitary retreat, and their love of nature is revealed in some of these, though it is always as a background for religious meditation that they think of her beauties.

"Those upland glades delightful to the soul,
Where the *kareri* spreads its wildering wreaths,
Where sound the trumpet-calls of elephants;
Those are the braes wherein my soul delights.
Those rocky heights with hue of dark blue clouds,
Where lies embosomed many a shining tarn
Of crystal-clear, cool waters, and whose slopes
The 'herds of Indra' cover and bedeck:
Those are the braes wherein my soul delights.
Like serried battlements of blue-black cloud,
Like pinnacles on stately castle built,
Re-echoing to the cries of jungle folk:
Those are the braes wherein my soul delights.
Fair uplands, rain-refreshed and resonant
With crested creatures' cries antiphonal.
Lone heights where silent Rishis oft resort:
Those are the braes wherein my soul delights. . . .
Free from the crowds of citizens below,
But thronged with flocks of many winged things,
The home of herding creatures of the wild;
Such are the braes wherein my soul delights.
Crags where clear waters lie, a rocky world,
Haunted by black-faced apes and timid deer,
Where 'neath bright blossoms run the silver streams:
Such are the braes wherein my soul delights.
For that which brings me exquisite delight
Is not the strains of string and pipe and drum,
But when, with intellect well poised, intent,
I gain the perfect vision of the Norm."[1]

But the *Saṅgha* as a whole led the corporate life; even if they separated into small groups they came together at stated intervals; and retreat would end with mutual confession and exhortation, known as *Pāvaraṇā*.

[1] *Theragāthā*, 1062-1071, Mrs. Rhys Davids' translation.

Then, when the wet season was over and all nature rejoiced, master and disciples would mingle once more with the busy throng of men. The day was most carefully planned.[1] Rising at dawn Gotama would go out either alone or with his followers to village or town, collecting alms. He would then break his fast, and would discourse to the monks, and give them exercises in meditation suited to their attainments. They would then leave him, going off each to his favourite spot to meditate, whilst Gotama would lie down on his right side "in the lion posture" in a quiet chamber, or better still in the cool shade of the forest, and rest—not sleeping, yet not practising systematic meditation. Then the people would come to him for preaching or advice. "When he had taken pity on them," he would bathe and spend a period in meditation in the cool of the evening. And in the first watch of the night he would answer the questions of the disciples, or preach to them. After that we must suppose he slept! It is characteristic of the monkish records that they account for every one of the twenty-four hours without allowing time for this. And after his death it was one of the tenets of the *Mahāsāṅghika* School that he had no need of sleep.

That the *Saṅgha* grew so rapidly was certainly not due to the ease of the life Gotama offered men. We get many glimpses of their austerity as they slept on the bare earth with no covering but the yellow robe; "Cold, master, is the winter night; the time of frost is coming; rough is the ground with the treading of the hoofs of cattle; thin is the couch of leaves, and light is the yellow robe; the winter wind blows keen";[2]

[1] Cf. the account in H. C. Warren's *Buddhism in Translations*, from Buddhaghosa's Commentary on *Dīgha Nikāya*.

A more poetical but later account is in *Sumaṅgala Vilāsinī*, translated by Dr. Rhys Davids in his *American Lectures*.

The student who compares the two accounts will note the growth of the miraculous element.

[2] *Aṅguttara: Sukhāsayama Sutta*, III, 4, 5, where Gotama claims that, rough as his bed might be, he slept calm and peaceful, unlike kings and worldlings.

said a dweller in Alavi as he saw the teacher seated in the midst of the Sinsapa Forest absorbed in meditation.

Often, however, they would stop to enjoy the hospitality of kings, and gradually they acquired many pleasant gardens and monasteries, such as the Bamboo Grove at Veluvana, given by Bimbisāra:

"Not too far from nor yet too near the town, well provided with entrances and exits; easily accessible to all people who inquire after it, with not too much of the bustle of life by day, quiet by night, far from the crowds of men, a place of retirement, a place for solitary meditation . . . in these gardens were the residences of the Brethren, houses, halls, cloisters, storerooms, surrounded by lotus pools, fragrant mango trees and slender fan palms that lifted their foliage high over all lands, and by the deep green foliage of the nyagrodha tree, whose roots dropping from the air to earth become new stems, with their cool shady arcades and leafy walks, seemed to invite to peaceful meditation."[1]

Hither would come to him kings and their retinues, and other lay people, or Brahmins and religious teachers who had heard of his fame; and, on moonlight nights when the Indian air is fragrant with the blossoms of flowering trees and solemn with the march of the stars, they would sit enthralled by his discourse on the eternal verities. But if any proved obstinate, Gotama would harry him remorselessly till he capitulated, cross-examining him like Socrates until, as we are told, in several passages, the sweat poured from the luckless man; for Gotama could be surgeon as well as physician. And often the patient would kiss the hand that wielded the knife!

At other times the *Saṅgha* might be seen pacing with downcast eyes amongst the villages of Magadha and Kosala, giving in return for their daily food the teaching of the Law, which we are reminded again and

[1] Oldenberg, *Buddha*, E.T., pp. 143, 145.

again is "the greatest of gifts." On the advice of Bimbisāra, Gotama appointed the eighth and the fourteenth, or the fifteenth and the sixteenth days of each month as *Uposatha* days for the assembling of the people to the *Dhamma*.[1]

It was a strange democracy which the great teacher gathered round him, and which he welded together by a common gratitude and a common purpose. Mrs. Rhys Davids[2] has shown from the commentary upon the *Theragāthā*, that of 259 poets to whom these psalms are attributed, 113 were Brahmins, 60 Kshatriyas, 7 landowners or cultivators, 53 burgesses or councillors, commoners, merchants, or "rich men's sons," 9 craftsmen, elephant trainers, etc., 10 pariahs, labourers, slaves, 1 actor, 3 sons of lay-adherents, 3 illegitimate sons of kings or sons of monks. She writes:

"That the large proportion of these men of letters belong to the class which were the custodians of religious lore and sacred hymns, was inevitable. The really interesting feature is that the residuum, consisting of noblemen trained in war, governance, and sports, or merchants, craftsmen, and the like, occupied with business, commerce, and constructive work, and of the illiterate poor, should be as numerous as it is. Or indeed, that there should have been any of the last-named at all as composers of verses deserving inclusion in the Canon. In fact, it would not be entirely unreasonable to conclude that if four per cent. of the canonical poets were drawn from the poor and despised of the earth, from whom no such products as verses could be expected, then the proportion of *bhikkhus*, in general, coming from that class may have been considerable."

However this may be, the fact stands out that there was real democracy within the *Saṅgha*.[3] An assassin,

[1] *Mahāvagga*, II, 1, 3 (*Sacred Books of the East*, XIII).

[2] *Psalms of the Brethren*, pp. XXVIII-XXIX.

[3] *Book of the Kindred Sayings*, I, Mrs. Rhys Davids, p. 207, cf. p. 210.

a barber, an acrobat, and a scavenger were also numbered amongst them, and one of the great services which Gotama Buddha did to his native land was to show that nobility is not a matter of birth, but of conduct; a lesson which she has not yet assimilated:

> "Nay, though he jabber multitudes of runes,
> Thus is no Brahmin made regenerate,
> Garbage-defiled, within propped by deceits.
> But be he noble, Brahmin, commoner,
> Or labouring man, or of pariah class,
> Who stirs up effort, puts forth all his strength,
> Advances with an ever vigorous stride,
> He may attain the Purity Supreme.
> Brahmin, know this!"

Nor was it only the Brahmin whom the great teacher bade live up to his name. The Rajput class from whom he himself had sprung, and kings, are reminded that he is the true warrior who controls himself and that self-masterly is true greatness; even the gods bow before the holy man! Very touching is the story of the scavenger Sunīta, and of Gotama's dealings with him; let him speak to us across a gulf of twenty-five centuries, and tell us of Gotama's humanity and tenderness:

> "Humble the clan wherein I took my birth,
> And poor was I, and scanty was my lot;
> Mean task was mine, a scavenger of flowers.
> One for whom no man cared, despised, abused.
> My mind I humbled and I bent the head
> In deference to a goodly tale of folk.
> And then I saw the All-Enlightened come,
> Begirt and followed by his bhikkhu-train,
> Great Champion ent'ring Magadha's chief town.
> I laid aside my baskets and my yoke,
> And came where I might due obeisance make;
> And of his loving-kindness just for me,
> The Chief of men halted upon his way.
> Low at his feet I bent, then standing by,
> I begged the Master's leave to join the Rule
> And follow him, of every creature Chief.
> Then he whose tender mercy watcheth all
> The world, the Master pitiful and kind,
> Gave me my answer: '*Come, Bhikkhu!*' he said:
> Thereby to me was ordination given.

"Lo! I alone in forest depths abode,
With zeal unfaltering wrought the Master's word,
Even the counsels of the Conqueror.
While passed the first watch of the night there rose
Long memories of the bygone line of lives,
While passed the middle watch, the heav'nly eye,
Purview celestial, was clarified.
While passed the last watch of the night, I burst
Asunder all the gloom of ignorance.
Then as the night wore down at dawn
And rose the sun, came Indra and Brahmā,
Yielding me homage with their claspéd hands;
'Hail unto thee, thou nobly born of men!
Hail unto thee, thou highest among men!
Perished for thee are all th' intoxicants;
And thou art worthy, noble sir, of gifts.'
The Master, seeing me by troop of gods
Begirt and followed, thereupon a smile
Revealing, by this utterance made response:
'By discipline of holy life, restraint
And mastery of self: hereby a man
Is holy; this is holiness supreme!'"[1]

It is a touching testimony at once to the humanity of Gotama and to the essential democracy of the *Saṅgha*.

To this strange assembly of men and women gathered together under the yellow robe, Gotama gave fully and without reserve his philosophical and moral teachings, and it was to them he entrusted the handing on of the torch when he passed away. In the early days Gotama himself admitted each new member to the *Saṅgha* with the simple words *Ehi Bhikkhu*, "Come, monk"; but as numbers grew and there were converts in many places, he delegated this office to the Order, instituting a form of ordination which has been maintained in an elaborated form ever since.

After examination to make sure that he is neither a leper nor maimed, and that he is not a confirmed criminal or a slave, the candidate is shaved and clothed in the yellow robe; he salutes the Bhikkhus and takes the "Three-Fold Refuge" in the *Buddha*, the *Dhamma*, and the *Saṅgha*. This he does three times, and is then

[1] *Psalms of the Brethren* (*Theragāthā*, CCXLII).

a duly ordained monk.[1] So was developed that great Company of the Yellow Robe, which has rendered such eminent service to India and the East—one of the oldest, as it is the most picturesque, of all religious orders; which, whilst it has often degenerated, shows such strange powers of recovery.

The student who would in imagination join himself to that glad yet solemn company will find himself not only moving amongst men and women who have forsaken all for the religious life; but may mingle in their midst with the lay folk of the Indian town and countryside of those far-off days and lead a life strangely blent of reality and tropical imagination.

"He will find himself for the most part in a woodland of faërie, opening out here on a settlement of religious brethren, there on scenes of life in rural communities such as might well be met in the India of to-day, or indeed in other countries. . . . The prince of darkness—of life-lust and of recurring death—will startle him in odd and fearsome shapes and ways. Grave and noble sisters will show him a serene peace, and a grasp of truth won at the cost of much that life holds dear. The incorrigible if amiable despot, and the priest, often no less incorrigible, will give themselves away as they talk before him. Mysterious aboriginal creatures, in process of being merged into the stock of folk-myth, will come from the abandoned shrines of dead deities to listen or to menace. And the gods of to-day will contend before him with gods of yesterday, become the Titans of to-day.

"And ever, as he wanders on, there will move before him, luminous and serene, the central figure of the great-hearted Gotama, bringing him to the wood's end braced and enlightened by the beneficent tension

[1] *Mahāvagga*, L, 12. Dr. Oldenberg argues with much reason that this "Tisarana," or Three-Fold Refuge, was instituted after Gotama's death: "Could anyone call the disciples his refuge so long as the Master was with them?" (*Buddha*, E.T., p. 338). Yet Gotama may have been preparing them to do without his presence.

of listening to many wise sayings. In these he will hear the lesser gods instructed and the higher gods brought low, the devil swept aside and the demons fearlessly confronted; the king given simple, practical, secular advice, not too high or unworldly for his limited intelligence, and the priest's rites and dogmas tested by a new and higher norm; the disciples' talents evoked and appreciated, and the earnest lay inquirer made welcome."[1]

As he studies the discourses and dialogues in more detail, he will find that he cannot wholly agree with Dr. Dahlke that they are "of a sublime sameness," nor with Dr. Oldenberg that they show "a motionless and rigid uniformity on which no lights and shadows fall."[2] It is true that in being edited they have all been passed through the same mould, but nevertheless there does shine out from them the fact that the teacher adapted his teaching to his pupil, and the commentator and editor have not been able wholly to stereotype his genius. Thus, for example, when King Agnidatta Pasenādi asks him if the law of decay and death is universal he replies, "Look at your royal chariot; even it is showing signs of wear and tear,"[3] and there are many similar instances of adaptation in Gotama's method. "While his discussions with the learned," says an Indian disciple, "were more or less formal and often coldly logical, in his conversation with ordinary men the Master generally resorted to similes and parables, fables and folklore, historical anecdotes and episodes, proverbs and popular sayings." His similes and parables are drawn for the most part from the jungle—the spoor of elephants, the ways of woodmen, the life of trees—or from the village: herdsman, farmer, fletcher, charioteer, all provide him with images, whilst the current folklore of his day was converted to religious purposes. The great things of nature, too, the "patient earth," the wonderful Indian moon, the sun in his

[1] *Book of the Kindred Sayings*, I, vi, vii.
[2] *Buddha*, E.T., p. 181.
[3] *Samyutta Nikāya*, III, 1, 3.

splendour, the majestic rivers—these supplied him with a wealth of imagery.

Gotama's methods of dealing with lay folk are well illustrated by the incident of the Brahmin farmer, Bharadvāja, who in the eleventh year of his ministry asked him why he did not work for his living, and was answered in the charming Parable of the Sower,[1] in which Gotama claims that he, too, is a farmer, and that he sows seed whose crop is ambrosia: which of course led to the farmer's conversion! As Sāriputta remarked, "It is by similes that men come often to understanding."[2]

As his fame spread, many came to him to seek consolation in bereavement, but it must be confessed, only to receive cold comfort. Best known is the case of the young mother who brought her dead child to him and was told to seek a house where Death had paid no visit, and get from it mustard seed. She sought in vain and came to realise that Death is universal, and to cease from vain lamentation.[3] Thus, too, he brought the aged Viśākhā to a calm and social acceptance of the fact that Death is common to all.

"The Upāsik Viśākhā was in the habit of giving alms to the Bhikkhus. One day her granddaughter Suddatā who lived with her fell ill and died; and Viśākhā, throwing the body into the charnel-pit, was unable to bear the grief. So she took her to the Buddha and sat on one side, sad and tearful. 'O Viśākhā!' asked the Blessed One, 'wherefore dost thou sit sad and mournful, shedding tears? She told him of her granddaughter's death, saying, 'She was a dutiful girl, and I cannot find her like.'

"'How many men say are there dwelling in Sāvatthi, O Viśākhā?'

"'Lord, men say there are seven *kotis* (seventy millions).'

"'If all these were like thy granddaughter, wouldst thou not love them?'

[1] See *The Heart of Buddhism*, pp. 19, 20.

[2] *Majjhima*, XLIII.

[3] *Sacred Books of the East*, X, 106.

"'Verily, Lord.'

"'And how many die daily in Sāvatthi?'

"'Many, Lord.'

"'Then there is never a moment when thou wouldst not be grieving for some one?'

"'True, Master.'

"'Wouldst thou then spend thy life weeping day and night?'

"'I understand, Lord; it is well said!'

"'Grieve then no more.'"[1]

There is a fine sanity about Gotama which shines through even such seeming coldness, and we cannot doubt that his words were spoken with real compassion and with an earnest desire to help. He was ever accessible to inquirers and to those who need advice. And he moved amongst them always serene and master of himself, always courteous and considerate. In the early books of the Pāli Canon there seems to be revealed a struggle just beginning between the moral ideals of self-culture and altruism; let the student compare many passages of the *Dhammapada*, for example, with the story of Punna or with the famous hymn on "Compassion," and he will realise that this conflict naturally gave birth to the two great schools of Buddhism, the Hīnayāna and the Mahāyāna.

The disciples, however, seem for the present to have dwelt together in great unity, each honouring the other for his contribution to the common life, all devoted to their leader.

The *Majjhima Nikāya* gives us a charming picture of the teacher surrounded by his disciples, and enables us to discover what were the gifts most highly valued amongst them. Moggallāna and Kassapa go to hear Sāriputta discoursing; Anuruddha, Revata,[2] and Ānanda join them. Sāriputta greets Ānanda thus: "Welcome, twice welcome, it is the Venerable Ānanda who waits

[1] *The Heart of Buddhism*, pp. 81, 82. From *Dhp*. Commentary.

[2] Revata was a brother of Sāriputta.

upon the Blessed One,[1] who is ever near the Blessed One! Charming, friend Ānanda, is Gosingam Wood, clear and cloudless are the nights, the lordly trees are decked in a wealth of fruit and blossom, fragrance as it were from heaven is wafted abroad. Of what sort, friend Ānanda, is the monk who adds to the glory of Gosingam Wood?"

Each of the Brethren answers in turn; Ānanda that "he who is well informed, treasures learning, accumulates learning, and hands it on with comments and explanations, he is the monk who adds to the glory of Gosingam Wood."

Revata says that it is the monk who delights in meditation and attains to ecstasy and penetrating insight in solitary places who adds to the glory of the Wood; Anuruddha that it is the man who has attained to "the heavenly eye" and sees a thousand worlds; Kassapa that it is the man who leads the forest life and sings its praises, who sings the praises also of the mendicant life, its poverty, solitude, ordered meditation, and the knowledge and deliverance which proceed from them, who adds a glory to the Wood.

Moggallāna says: "Two monks, friend Sāriputta, discuss together deeper things of the doctrine by putting questions each to the other. And having answered such questions each again withdraws apart, their conversation having been edifying and instructive. Of such sort, friend Sāriputta, is the monk who adds to the glory of Gosingam Wood."

Lastly, Sāriputta himself is asked by Moggallāna to reply: "A certain monk, friend Moggallāna, bears rule over his own mind, his mind does not bear rule over him. In whatsoever mental attainment he desires to abide during each watch of the day, in that he duly abides, just as a king or great noble, possessed of a chest full of garments of many different colours, in the morning hours wears what he chooses for the morning

[1] An indication that this incident belongs to the last thirty years of his public ministry.

wear, and at midday whatever robes he prefers for midday wear, and again in the evening wears garments which he has selected for the evening. Of like kind is the monk who rules his mind and meditates at each watch of the day upon what he will. Of such a sort, Moggallāna, is the monk who adds to the glory of Gosingam Wood."

Having each answered, they agree that they will go and ask Gotama, and they go and report their conversation to him. He has a word of praise for each, and says that each has answered rightly according to his capacity and training; each has spoken out of his own experience, and therefore truly. Sāriputta asks which has spoken best, and he replies: "Each of you in his way has spoken well, Sāriputta; but now hear from me what sort of monk adds to the glory of Gosingam Wood. The monk, Sāriputta, having returned from his begging round and partaken of his meal, sits down with crossed legs under him, body upright, and brings himself to a state of recollectedness. 'I will not rise from this spot,' he resolves within himself, 'until, freed from clinging, my mind attains to deliverance from all Bane.' Such is the monk, Sāriputta, who truly adds to the glory of Gosingam Wood."[1] In another passage Gotama compares Moggallāna with Sāriputta: "Like a woman who gives birth to a son, so is Sāriputta to a young disciple; like a schoolmaster who educates him, so is Moggallāna."[2] Here we get tenderness praised as well as more intellectual qualities; but in the former passage it is noteworthy that neither master nor disciples make any reference to the glory of service. Ānanda, as we should expect, comes nearest to it.

Yet these leading disciples vied with each other in waiting upon Gotama, till in the twenty-fifth year of his public minstry he summoned them to the "Fragrance Chamber" and addressed them thus: "O monks, I am now an old man, and some of you as you wait upon me

[1] *Discourses of Gotama, the Buddha*, tr. by Silācāra, II, 73-70.
[2] *Majjhima Nikāya*, III, 248.

are clumsy and some self-willed, turning one way when I would go another. Do ye know of a monk who shall become my regular attendant?" A noble emulation followed these rather blunt words. Sāriputta, who was known as the "general of the Dhamma," and Moggallāna both prayed to be allowed to wait upon him, as did all the other chief disciples. Only Ānanda kept silence. He had no great gifts of mind such as distinguished the others, and when they questioned him, "Why do you not speak?" he replied, "Let the Master chose! Else what choice is it?" But being invited by Gotama himself, he shrewdly laid down some very sensible conditions—that invitations to the Master were to be considered first by him and that he was to receive no special privileges except those of waiting upon Gotama and being instructed in the *Dhamma* by him.[1]

So Ānanda was appointed, and for twenty-five years was Gotama's "faithful shadow," combining the duties of pupil, body-servant, and chaplain with admirable devotion—even though at times he was accused of being too fussy about details,[2] whether of his household duties, or of the moral teachings of the *Dhamma*. Only after Gotama's death did he attain *Arahatship*; but it was not for want of earnest striving and whole-hearted devotion that the vision tarried so long.

Such, then, was the way of the *Saṅgha*—a way of quiet yet strenuous activity—in which there was time for life's courtesies, and abundant leisure for discussion of those problems which according to Gotama are "heart-wood" problems—dealing with essential points of conduct or of mind culture. That there were abuses in the *Saṅgha* the books honourably and faithfully record—sins of the flesh crept in, both those which are called "natural" and those which are abnormal, and sins of schism.

There was an unruly group of monks, for instance, known as the Khabbaggiya Bhikkhus, who seem to have been possessed with a demon of mischief, beating the

[1] *Theragāthā*, CCLX. [2] *Ibid.*, CXIX.

novices and even pouring dirty water on the nuns! And at Kosambī a serious schism took place. A certain monk was expelled and others took his part. Gotama cried out, "The Order is divided!" and in great distress went to Kosambī and laid down legislation for their guidance. But things got worse and the monks even came to blows. Gotama told them the beautiful story of Dighiti, king of Kosala, who forgave his enemy the king of Kasi, and taught the great lesson that "hatred never ceases by hatred, but only through love is it put to an end."[1] Even this did not pacify them, and Gotama left them saying, "Truly they are fools and infatuate." The books of discipline are full of warnings against the sin of disorder in the *Saṅgha*; and Gotama is recorded himself to have said, "Whoso troubleth the Order abideth for an age in perdition: yea, he burneth in hell."[2] The most serious schism was that led by Devadatta, and this was made all the sadder by the fact that Gotama and he were both old men when it came to a head.

[1] *Mahāvagga*, X, 2 (*Sacred Books of the East*, XIII).
[2] *Itivuttaka*, §19.

V

THE OLD AGE AND DEATH OF GOTAMA

The morally strenuous do not die !—Dhammapada 21.

In the year 491 B.C. King Bimbisāra of Magadha was succeeded by his son Ajātasattu, who as we have seen, is described in the Buddhist books as "the friend and supporter of all that is evil." However that may be, he carried on his father's work, and by conquering Kosala and Vesālī, made Magadha supreme in north-east India.

When he came to the throne Gotama was seventy-two years old, but his genius still shone bright and clear, and he seems to have lost nothing of his virility and strength. This is illustrated in the record of the first meeting between him and the new king, who tried to test him by asking: "What in the world is the good of this renunciation of yours, and this Order of yours? For, people such as elephant-riders, charioteers, archers, slaves, cooks, barbers, bath-attendants, confectioners, potters, garland-makers, clerks, accountants, and the like who follow ordered crafts get something out of them. They can make themselves comfortable in this world and keep their families in comfort. Can you, sir, declare to me any such immediate fruit reaped in this world of the life of a recluse?"[1] To which Gotama answered, politely yet pointedly reminding him of the peasantry, whom he had not mentioned, yet upon whom as taxpayers both he and his court depended; a timely reminder to the landed proprietor in India then as now,

[1] Quoted by Rhys Davids, *Buddhist India*, p. 88.

and an indication that in those days Kshatriyas, like Brahmins, paid no taxes.

Though they now met for the first time, it seems clear that some at least of the *Saṅgha* had had dealings with Ajātasattu whilst he was still *raj-kumāra* (crown prince). Devadatta, who came to Gotama in the very early days at Anupiya, may have joined the Order then, or, more probably, may have wavered for some years before he was admitted.[1] When he was ordained he made little progress in the essence of the religion, but acquired great skill in magic of a worldly kind.[2] This he practised on the prince of Magadha with such success that he brought him to a determination to murder his father, the king, and to help oust Gotama from the leadership of the *Saṅgha*. Black magic indeed!

Bimbisāra was either murdered by his son, or in a very Indian way retired in his favour. The books generally call Ajātasattu parricide, but whether he carried out his vile plot or no, he secured the throne.

When the news of Devadatta's complicity in the crime was brought to Gotama, he replied with a discourse showing that pride goes before a fall. So it proved with Devadatta; jealousy and pride grew unchecked in him, until he openly and in the presence of the king asked Gotama to hand over the leadership of the *Saṅgha*, alleging that old age had overtaken him. Kern drily points out that Devadatta and Gotama were of the same age; but it is possible that he had become a novice whilst still a child, and was in reality a good deal younger than his great cousin.

[1] Professor Rhys Davids says that he was not admitted till the twentieth year of Gotama's ministry, but this statement is, I venture to believe, based on a misreading of the song of Ānanda quoted below, where Ānanda is referring not to the time he had been a Bhikkhu, but to the period of his personal attendance upon Gotama. There is not sufficient reason for abandoning the accepted tradition that Devadatta was one of the Śākyan princes who joined Gotama at the beginning of his public ministry, together with his cousin Ānanda. To Professor Rhys Davids' article in the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* I am much indebted.

[2] *Vinaya*, II, 286.

Gotama was of a sterner mould than Bimbisāra, and more was at stake than even the prosperity and well-being of a kingdom! Moreover, he had no intention of appointing a successor: the *Saṅgha* was to become a democracy, not a hierarchy. He denounced Devadatta with these comments:

"He is as one who seeks to pollute the ocean with a jar of poison!"[1]

> "As is the plantain, the bamboo, and the rush
> Each by the fruit it bears undone,
> So is the sinner by men's homage slain."[2]

This admirable detached and confident spirit he maintained as the plot thickened.[3] The various attempts of Devadatta to kill his master are described in detail in the books. The story of the elephant whom he made drunk and then let loose upon Gotama is improbable, though it serves to illustrate the belief of Gotama's followers in his great power over the animal world.[4] That which tells how a band of cut-throats hired by Devadatta were won over by Gotama's loving and dignified bearing is quite probable. They were not the only brigands who yielded to the power of love, as it was embodied in Gotama: Angulimāla, who wore a necklet of 999 human fingers taken from his victims, is an even more famous case, and the story of his conversion is still used in Buddhist lands as a charm.[5]

Devadatta's next move was to split the *Saṅgha*; he demanded a more ascetic rule of life, urging, amongst other things, that the monks should dwell only in the woods, should eat no meat, and should clothe themselves

[1] *Itivuttaka*, 89.

[2] *Samyutta*, I, 153.

[3] In the *Milinda Pañha*, VII, 6, 11 (*Sacred Books of the East*, XXXVI, 355), Sāriputta is represented as saying that Gotama was equally minded to Devadatta, the conspirator, and to Rāhula, his own worthy son.

[4] Like St. Francis of Assisi and other saints, Gotama does seem to have had a strange power over animals. Cf. the *Cariya Pitaka*, in which he claims to have lived in a former birth surrounded by wild beasts whom his benevolence had tamed.

[5] Cf. the story of St. Francis and the robbers, *Fioretti*, p. 26.

in cast-off rags. These proposals Gotama, with splendid sanity, rejected; but Devadatta had now a fairly strong case for appealing to the younger spirits in the Order, 500 of whom are said to have joined him. As the *Dhammapada*[1] says: "Honey-sweet to the fool is his sin until it ripens; then he comes to grief"; and "When the fool's wisdom bears evil fruit it bursts asunder his happiness, and smashes his head."[2] Devadatta was riding for a fall! We find him at last surrounded by a group of adherents discoursing on his view of the doctrine. He sees Sāriputta and Moggallāna approaching and rejoices, thinking that they have come to join him. Continuing the discourse far into the night he falls asleep, leaving Sāriputta to carry on. Sāriputta gives them a lecture on preaching, and Moggallāna follows this with a discussion of true magic (*iddhi*) as opposed to false. What wonder then that when Devadatta awakes he finds the flock scattered and only a few of his followers left? We are told that the blood poured from his mouth, which suggests that a fit of apoplectic rage came upon him. Here we may leave him, though a later book tells a story of a visit when near his death to Gotama; and of how he claimed his kinship with the Master, and repeated the formula of refuge; soon afterwards he died and went to hell.

Whatever we may think of the details of this story, it seems pretty clear that not only Buddhists, but Jains and others outside the Order, knew about the schism.[3] It is characteristic of the Buddhist books that the case of Devadatta is used rather to enforce the lesson of emancipation of mind[4] as the central object of the religion than as a warning against disloyalty. Devadatta is a typical "fool" rather than a typical "traitor," and in their boundless optimism the books maintain that it is never too late for the fool to have his eyes opened;

[1] 69-72.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] Cf. *Majjhima*, 392, quoted by Professor Rhys Davids, E.R.E., IV.

[4] Cf. *Majjhima*, I, 192.

Buddhists even believe that Devadatta will come again as a Buddha.

We cannot doubt that this defection of one of his chief disciples, involving as it did a *temporary split in the Saṅgha*, was a sore grief to the aged Gotama. Confident he clearly was that such pride as Devadatta's must come to a speedy end: he would not allow it to provoke him to anger, and yet this betrayal by one of his own household must have clouded and saddened his last days.

Another crushing blow must have been the destruction of his people in the seventh year of Ajātasattu by Vidudābha, king of Kosala. Vidudābha was a son of the Pasenādi of Kosala by the natural daughter of one of the Śākyan nobles, and a slave-girl.[1] When he grew up he felt that his father had been slighted by the Śākyans, and his own life clouded by the trick they had played. He marched upon Kapilavatthu, and exterminated the clan.[2]

Ajātasattu meantime began to be troubled by conscience, and on the advice of Jīvaka, his physician, who seems to have been something of a psychologist, he sought Gotama and under that gentle and skilful knife lost the "root of evil," even though he had to endure the consequences of past sin. We find him wreaking terrible vengeance upon the bandits who murdered the venerable Moggallāna, and the aged teacher calmly arguing that neither he nor they could have met such an end did their *Kamma* not demand it, Moggallāna's culminating after innumerable years.

Gotama's life was now drawing to a close; there are events which we may believe occurred in this evening of his days, but we have no actual chronology. One charming incident, not unlike the meeting of St. Francis and St. Dominic at the end of their days, was his sojourn with Pukkusāti in the "house of the potter" at Rājagaha. The old man Pukkusāti had been a king of Taxila in Gandhāra, and a friend of Bimbisāra; perhaps the two kings and the physician Jīvaka had been fellow-

[1] See above, Chap. I.

[2] *Jātaka*, IV, 144, quoted by Kern, *Handbook of Indian Buddhism*, p. 40.

students at the great university. Gotama was wandering alone near Rājagaha, and asked a night's shelter at the potter's house; he was told that a friar of noble birth was already within, but was allowed to share the hospitality of the house; and the two old men sat meditating, till Gotama, noting the serenity of his companion, asked him why he had left the world and who was his teacher—apparently a recognised formula on such occasions. Pukkusāti replied that it was the Śākya muni whom he followed. Gotama did not make himself known at once, but began to expound the *Dhamma*, till Pukkusāti cried out with joy, "I have found the Master whom I sought." So sure was Gotama's touch on human hearts and minds; and the very legends show how great an impression he made upon the men of his nation. An Indian disciple has written of him thus:

"More potent than his method and his word was the Blessed One's wonderful personality. When he talked with men his serene look inspired them with awe and reverence, and his lovely voice struck them with rapture and amazement. Could mere words have converted the robber Angulimāla or the cannibal of Alavi? To have come under his spell is to be his for ever. He was a winner of hearts. It is not so much because he preached the truth that his hearers believed; it is because he had won their hearts that his words appeared to them true and salutary. A single word from him was enough to reconcile King Prasenajit to his Queen Mallika. His heart always overflowed with kindness. Was it not the effluence of the Master's love that made Roja the Mallian follow him as a calf does the cow? To meet him is to be penetrated by his love (*maitri*) and to know him is to love him for ever."[1]

Even we of the West are glad to echo this sentiment, and to acknowledge that charm which, despite the lapse

[1] Narasu, *The Essence of Buddhism*, 2nd edition, p. 21 The author is a convert from Hinduism to Buddhism. Roja was a rather bitter opponent of the *Saṅgha* whom Gotama converted by "sending out to him a wave of benevolence" (*Mahāvagga*, VI, 36, 4).

of twenty-five centuries, and the artificiality of the records which enshrine his life, still lays its spell on our hearts. We love him for his amazing courage, for his sweet reasonableness, for his quiet dignity, for his tenderness to all living things, for his moral earnestness, and not least for his sturdy protest against unworthy ideas of God and of religion. Sincerity was the keynote of his life, as graciousness was the secret of his power over men's hearts. In the happy phrase of a Japanese disciple, "Here was a king of the spiritual in the guise of beggary."[1]

Gotama was now seventy-nine years old. He continued his ministry of preaching and teaching, revisiting his favourite haunts, from Pātaliputta in the south-east to Sāvatthi in the north-east, and the incident of his advice to the Vajjians may belong to this period; as does his prophecy that Pātaliputta, then being fortified by Ajātasattu, would become a great city[2]—both examples of shrewd insight.

We still find the great ones of the land competing for the honour of entertaining him; thus the courtesan Ambapāli outdid the Licchavi nobles and entertained him sumptuously at Vesālī.[3] From there he went to a village named Beluvā, where he spent his last retreat. Here a severe illness laid him low and he felt that death was approaching, but he continued visiting his disciples to the end. At Pāva he took a meal at the house of Chunda, the smith. Some very tough pork was set before him, and Gotama, anxious not to hurt the poor man's feelings, ate it. Then, with a whimsical smile, he asked Chunda to bury what was left, "for no one in the world except a Buddha could digest it." He was seized with an attack of dysentery, yet pressed on to Kusināra, where under some sandal trees he bade Ānanda spread a couch for him; there he lay down on his right side, with his head towards the north, "in the lion attitude."

[1] Riusaku Tsunoda, *The Essence of Japanese Buddhism*, p. 16. The author as a Buddhist missionary has proved his devotion.

[2] *Mahāvagga*, VI, 28 (*Sacred Books of the East*, XVII, 101).

[3] *Mahāvagga*, XVII, 105.

It is thus that the ancient monuments depict him, calm and serene, yet very weary, with Ānanda standing in tears at his head. To the last his spirit shone clear and even humorous. Thus, when one of the monks, or as the Burmese record has it, a stout nun, stood fanning him, he said rather harshly, "Stand aside"; when Ānanda asked the reason for this harshness, Gotama, with a twinkle in his eye we may be sure, replied that there were myriads of gods anxious to have a sight of the Master, and this "powerful one" stood in the way! To Ānanda, weeping bitterly and crying, "Behold, I am but a learner and not yet perfect, and my teacher is passing to *Nibbāna*, he who was so compassionate to me," Gotama sent a message, and when he came and stood respectfully at one side, "Enough, Ānanda," he said, "weep no more. Have I not already told thee that it is in the nature of things, however dear, that we must be separated from them? How can it be, Ānanda, that what has been born should not perish? Long, O Ānanda, hast thou waited on the Blessed One with kind, devoted and single-hearted service. Much merit hast thou acquired, O Ānanda! Continue to strive and soon thou wilt be free from all trace of evil." Then he commended Ānanda to the rest for his four wonderful qualities, amongst them his popular preaching, alike to the initiated and the lay people, and his devoted service. When he had spoken, Ānanda, true to his character, fussily urged Gotama to leave this "wattle and daub" town in the jungle and to go to one of the big cities, such as Rājagaha or Benares, and make a dignified end in more respectable surroundings! Gotama refused and, devising a task to keep the poor old man busy, sent him to tell the Mallas that the Blessed One was passing away in their territory and to summon them to his side. The whole clan came out, and Ānanda, with his love of order, marshalled them by families and brought them in this order to do reverence to Gotama. To Ānanda's question as to what should be done with his body after death Gotama bade him leave such matters to the pious laity. It is clear that he found the poor old man rather officious!

The wandering ascetic Subaddha was anxious to have a doubt in his mind cleared before the Master died, and Ānanda refused him admission. But Gotama, overhearing the conversation, cried: "Enough, Ānanda, hinder him not. Let Subaddha ask, for he asks, not to trouble me, but to gain wisdom." Seated respectfully at one side, Subaddha asked whether the other teachers, including Makkhali, Gosāla, Ajita, Sañjaya, and others had really discovered truth as they maintained, or were impostors. To this Gotama replies that in whatever doctrine and discipline the Noble Eight-fold Path is not found, there are not found true monks: "But let those within the Order live rightly and the world will not lack saints." "Wonderful, sir, wonderful," cried Subaddha, who seems to have been a simple soul, and joined the Order. Then Gotama turned to Ānanda: "It may be, O Ananda, that some of you will think the word of the Teacher belongs to the past; we have no teacher any more; but that, O Ānanda, is a wrong view. The doctrine and discipline, O Ānanda, which I have taught you, let that be your teacher when I am gone."[1] Then there followed some details as to organisation, and the command to punish one of the brethren who had been unruly. Lastly, Gotama asked them all if there was any doubt or perplexity in their minds. "Ask now, O monks, lest afterwards ye feel remorse, saying, 'Our teacher was present with us, yet we failed to put to him all our questions.'" Thrice he asked them, and thrice they kept silence, till Ānanda broke out: "It is wonderful, Reverend Sir, it is marvellous! I believe that in the whole congregation there is no one of us who has a doubt or a perplexity respecting either the Buddha, or the Doctrine, or the Order, or the Eight-Fold Path." "With you, O Ānanda, it is a matter of faith; but with

[1] That Ānanda learned his lesson well is shown by the story of his meeting with Vassakāra, a general whom Ajātasattu had put in charge of the work of fortifying Rājagaha. Asked by the general how the unity of the *Saṅgha* could be maintained if no Head was apparent, he replied, "We have the Teaching." One wonders if this satisfied the military mind!

the Blessed One it is a matter of knowledge." Then, turning to them all, he bade them farewell, saying: "Now, O monks, I take my leave of you. All things are composite and all are transient; work with diligence for the goal of freedom."

These were his last words, and are a fitting summary of the teaching he laboured so hard to popularise amongst his people. In death as in life he was serene and stoical: "Death so divinely calm and tranquil," says a modern Japanese disciple, "has no parallel in human history"—a pardonable exaggeration—"the moon paled, the river sobbed, but one can hardly exaggerate the sense of loss of the disciples, who followed him to the last and witnessed, to their grief and joy, the most sublime scene of human history."[1] Ānanda, weeping beside the Master he had so faithfully served, is reported to have sung this song:

"For five-and-twenty years a learner I;
No sensual consciousness arose in me.
O see the seemly order of the Norm!
For five-and-twenty years a learner I;
No hostile consciousness arose in me.
O see the seemly order of the Norm!
For five-and-twenty years on the Exalted One
I waited, serving him by loving deeds,
And like his shadow followed after him.
For five-and-twenty years on the Exalted One
I waited, serving him with loving speech,
And like his shadow followed after him.
For five-and-twenty years on the Exalted One
I waited, serving him with loving thoughts,
And like his shadow followed after him.
When pacing up and down, the Buddha walked,
Behind his back I kept the pace alway;
And when the Norm was being taught, in me
Knowledge and understanding of it grew.
But I am one who yet has work to do,
A learner with a mind not yet matured;
And now the Master hence hath passed away,
Who e'er to me such sweet compassion showed!"[2]

[1] *The Essence of Japanese Buddhism*, p. 27.

[2] *Theragāthā*, 1039-1045, in Mrs. Rhys Davids' *Psalms of the Brethren*, p. 357. The "Norm" is the *Dhamma* or "Law."

The other disciples, further advanced in the path of emancipation, were more stoical and Anuruddha came to Ānanda's help, realising, it would seem, that the only way to comfort him was to keep him busy. He sent him off to summon the Mallas, and to prepare the funeral pyre. Surrounding tribes, the Licchavis and others, as well as some of the neighbouring kings, including Ajātasattu, claimed a portion of the relics. At first the Mallas were unwilling to part with any of them, but a Brahmin Dona, reminding them of the magnanimity and forbearance of Gotama, chid their churlishness. So Gotama Buddha's remains were divided into eight equal portions, some of which are being unearthed to-day from their ancient places of burial.[1]

The date of his death has been variously reckoned. Max Müller placed it at 447 B.C., Oldenberg at 480 B.C., Kern at 370-380 B.C. Our materials for arriving at this date are the Ceylon chronicles, and Greek and other evidence for the dates of the Mauryan Emperors Chandragupta and Asoka. Working at this evidence Cunningham in 1877 arrived at the date 260 B.C. for the anointing of Asoka, and the year 478 B.C. for the death of Gotama.

The whole question has since been very thoroughly discussed, notably by Dr. J. F. Fleet,[2] who places the death of Gotama on October 13, 482 B.C.

The place is described as a sorry little town,[3] and seems to have lain at the confluence of the rivers

[1] The great stone coffin discovered in the Nepalese Tarai by Mr. W. C. Peppé in 1898 is held by some scholars to have contained relics of Gotama; but Dr. Fleet has made a strong case for reading the inscription of the small *stupa* contained in the coffin as follows: "This is a deposit of relics of the Blessed One, of his brethren and their little sisters, their wives and children" (*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1906). And the ornaments contained in the vessel are pathetic trinkets which we can well imagine as adorning the little victims of Vidudabha's fury when he sacked Kapilavatthu. They would be rather incongruous in the urn of the Lion of the Śākyas! Yet very similar relics have recently been unearthed in Peshāwar.

[2] *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1909.

[3] *Jātaka*, in Cowell and Chalmers' translation, I, 231.

Hiranyāvati and Achirāvati, the modern Little Rapti and Gandak. Another site which is more probable is near Kasia in the Gorakhpur District, a spot regarded as one of highest sanctity from the time of Asoka onwards. Several monasteries of various dates besides other buildings and many votive *stupas* have been built upon it, and Hiuen Tsian describes a colossal image of the dying Buddha, which might well mark the exact spot. But there are many doubtful points which still have to be cleared up before this question can be decided with any measure of certainty.

What is far more important is that in the account of his last days and death we have a document of whose authenticity and early date there can be little doubt;[1] for it breathes the very spirit of his life, and Ānanda and the other principal actors in it are not the lay-figures of so many of the Suttas, whose rôle is to say "Yes, yes," or "No, no," but figures of flesh and blood infinitely pathetic as they gather, calmly for the most part, yet with deep sadness, to catch the last words of their great leader. Can we wonder that these words and those poignant scenes were not allowed to pass unrecorded?

It speaks much for the frankness of the records that they tell us that no sooner had the Teacher passed away than the monk Subaddha bade them cease their lamentations. "We are well rid," said he, "of the great Sage. He harassed us by his discipline. Now we are free to follow our own bent." Here was another Devadatta, protesting that the discipline was too severe, whereas the arch-schismatic had complained that it was too lax! But most of the *Saṅgha* were content to follow their great Chief, and he died calmly confident that his teachings would prevail.

[1] Dr. Rhys Davids calls it "the oldest and most reliable of our authorities" and holds that it cannot be dated later than the fourth century B.C. Yet in view of the large element of the miraculous in it, we must conceive it as being edited by a later hand.

VI

THE SECRET OF GOTAMA

"Jettho Settho Lokassa": The Honoured Elder Brother of Mankind.

No name is so honoured throughout the East as that of Gotama. No Indian name is so widely revered throughout the world.

His teaching has inspired missionaries to go out to all neighbouring lands, where they have exerted an influence incalculably great as educators and philanthropists as well as preachers; and to-day, after many centuries of inertia, his disciples are beginning to propagate their religion in the West and in India, where it has almost disappeared—though not without leavening the thought and sweetening the life of her peoples. What is the secret of Gotama's amazing success? It is to be found chiefly in his personality. As Dr. Hopkins says:

"It was the individual Buddha that captivated men; it was the teaching that emanated from him that fired enthusiasm; it was his position as an aristocrat that made him acceptable to the aristocracy, his magnetism that made him the idol of the people. From every page stands out the strong, attractive personality of this teacher and winner of hearts. No man ever lived so godless yet so godlike. Arrogating to himself no divinity, despairing of future bliss, but without fear as without hope, leader of thought but despising lovingly the folly of the world, exalted but adored, the universal brother, he wandered among men, simply, serenely; with gentle irony subduing them that opposed him, to

congregation after congregation speaking with majestic sweetness, the master to each, the friend of all. His voice was singularly vibrant and eloquent;[1] his very tones convinced the hearer, his looks inspired awe. From the tradition it appears that he must have been one of those whose personality alone suffices to make a man not only a leader but a god to the hearts of his fellows. When such an one speaks he obtains hearers. It matters little what he says, for he influences the emotions, and bends whoever listens to his will. But if added to this personality, if encompassing it, there be the feeling in the minds of others that what this man teaches is not only a verity, but the very hope of their salvation; if for the first time they recognise in his words the truth that makes of slaves free men, of classes a brotherhood, then it is not difficult to see wherein lies the lightning-like speed with which the electric current passes from heart to heart. Such a man was Buddha, such was the essential of his teaching; and such was the inevitable rapidity of Buddhistic expansion, and the profound influence of shock that was produced by the new faith upon the moral consciousness of Buddha's people."[2]

All students of that wonderful life will appreciate the sincerity of this tribute, and most will be glad to endorse it. Of Gotama's serenity, of his moral earnestness, of his sweet reasonableness, of his compassion, of his wisdom, and above all of his magnetic winsomeness, there can be no dispute. That he planned wisely and built on strong foundations, the history of Buddhism through twenty-five centuries proclaims.[3]

That his disciples gave him a place which the modern world, with all its admiration, must needs

[1] Cf. Kern, *The Lotus*, III, 21, and Fausboll's *Parāyama Sutta*, 9 (1131), the "deep and lovely voice of Buddha," and *Theragāthā*, CCXLII, "his voice divinely sweet"; also *Sacred Books of the East*, XII, 58.

[2] Hopkins, *The Religions of India*, pp. 325, 326.

[3] For a Buddhist poem admirably expressing this see *The Heart of Buddhism*, pp. 58-60.

question is no less evident. Let us consider a typical passage in the early Buddhist books:

"At one time, as the Blessed One was wandering here and there through the Kingdom of Kosala with a large following of disciples, he came to a place called Sāla, a Kosalan Brahmin village.

"And the Brahmin householders Sāla heard tell: 'That very ascetic, the venerable Gotama of the Śākyas, who forsook his position among the Śākyas to lead the homeless life, is travelling about Kosala with a large company of followers, and has arrived at Sāla, and the venerable Gotama enjoys this fair fame: "This is He, the Holy One, the Perfect in Knowledge and in Conduct, the Auspicious, the Knower of all the worlds, the Incomparable Trainer of men that wish to be trained, the Teacher of gods and men, the Awakened One, the Holy One! And, having by his own powers penetrated this world with its gods and Māras, and Brahmās, its ascetics and recluses, the whole race of gods and men, He makes known the same. He proclaims the Truth, excellent in its inception, its progress, its culmination, according to the spirit and according to the letter both. He preaches the Holy Life, perfect and pure. Blessed it is to behold such an Exalted One!'"

"Then those Brahmin householders of Sāla went whither was the Blessed One, and drawing near, before taking their seats respectfully at one side, some gave the Blessed One reverential greeting, some exchanged the customary compliments of friendship and civility, some extended folded hands towards the Blessed One, some announced their names and families to the Blessed One, whilst others took their seats in silence.

"Thus seated respectfully at one side, these Brahmin householders of Sāla now spake to the Blessed One as follows:

"'For what reason, on what account is it, venerable Gotama, that some beings, upon the dissolution of the body after death, go upon a sorry journey to ruin and woe in the hell-world; and again, for what cause, do

some beings, when the body breaks up in death, go upon a happy journey to the heavenly regions?'

"'On account of evil and unrighteous behaviour, O householders, for this cause it is that some beings after death come to realms of woe, and because of good and righteous behaviour, O householders, do other beings at the dissolution of the body come to realms of bliss.'"[1]

We have only to read such a passage, one of many like it in the Buddhist books, to be struck by the contrast between the elementary and simple doctrine of retribution given by the teacher, and the extravagant titles lavished upon him by his followers.[2]

Whether we really believe that such language was used during his lifetime or not, it is clear that it was adopted by those who wrote and edited the books. How are we to account for this astonishing promotion from the position of leader of a band of ascetics to "teacher of gods and men"? Personal magnetism, moral prestige, and above all radiant confidence in his discovery—these are the main elements in his success. And to these we must add that the India of his day was hungry for a way of finding peace and a way of escape from rebirth; for to them, as to their descendants, "life was but one stage of a measureless journey, whose way stretched back through all the night of the past, and forward through all the mystery of the future." And they were weary and afraid. Here was a teacher confidently claiming to give men the key to their shackles!

The narrative which we have quoted here proceeds with an elaboration by the teacher of his theme, and the detailed application of it, and ends with the following instructive passages:

"And, if, householders, a man of good and righteous ways of life shall wish: 'After death, may I be reborn

[1] *Discourses of Gotama Buddha*, tr. by Silācāra, II, 152, 153.

[2] Other claims made for Gotama by the canonical books are magical powers enabling him to handle sun and moon, knowledge of his former existences, perfect insight into character. Cf. *Discourses*, I, 87, 88; *Majjhima*, II, 2, etc.

among the renowned of the warrior class!' or: 'May I be reborn among the renowned of the priestly class!' or: 'May I be reborn among the renowned householder class!'—this his wish may well be fulfilled: he may indeed be reborn into an eminent warrior or priestly or householder family, and why so? Even because he has been of good and righteous ways of life.

"Or if, householders, a man of good and righteous ways of life should cherish the desire: 'O that after death I might appear among the gods of the Four Great Kings, among the gods of the Thirty-and-Three, among the gods of the Realm of Yama or among the gods of any realm whatsover, even up to the Realm of Neither Perception nor non-Perception'—this his desire might well be granted: he might indeed after death appear among whatsoever gods he desires to appear.

"Or if, finally, a man of good and righteous ways of life should thus aspire: 'O even in this present lifetime, by the destruction of the Banes, being freed from Bane, penetrating and realising for myself, may I attain to the Deliverance of the Mind, the Deliverance that is through Wisdom!'—this his aspiration may indeed be satisfied; he may indeed attain in his present lifetime the Deliverance of the Mind that is through Wisdom, and why so? Even because he has been of good and righteous ways of life."[1]

"In this world," says Lafcadio Hearn, "to practice the highest virtue was difficult; and the great rewards were hard to win. But for all good deeds a recompense was sure, and there was no one who could not acquire merit."[2]

These statements will help us to an understanding of the extraordinary influence wielded by this great man during his life, and of the rapidity with which he was promoted to a place above the gods. For they show us that he spoke with the calm conviction of the man of science; that whilst he recognised the gods, he

[1] *Discourses of Gotama Buddha*, tr. by Silācāra, II, 158, 159.
[2] *Japan*, p. 215.

claimed to possess a veritable key of heaven which would admit the good man into their company; and above all, that he taught with the same calm authority that higher than the life of any god was the life of Freedom to be attained by the wise. "Become an expert in my doctrine," he said in effect, "and you will be above all gods!" In a land of tropical imagination here was Reason speaking; in a land of subtle metaphysics here was a champion of morality!

Set this serene teacher against the background of the India of his day, already distracted and perplexed by a hundred conflicting teachings and by countless rival gods, and it is not very difficult to understand the influence that he wielded. We find to-day that the simple message of the unity of God carries ready conviction amongst animistic peoples. Similarly the preaching of cause and effect in the moral sphere on the lips of a man of magnetic personality, and triumphant with the sense that what he taught he had himself experienced, worked like a charm in men's hearts; it set before them an ideal "at once awful as law and humanly near and gracious as the Master." Yet more potent than his preaching, and more constraining even than his personality, was the sense of emancipation and joy which radiated from him and his followers. Something of this contagious spirit of joy we may still catch as we read the songs of his yellow-robed company. They were as men who had been lost in a jungle-thicket, and had found their way out to some quiet summit of the hills, austere, yet invigorating and welcome after the stifling closeness of those tropical forests. Their state of mind was not unlike that of the Christian convert, of whom it has been said:

"There can scarcely be found in the world joy equal to this feeling of expansion. It is almost like the acquisition of a new life. It is like what we can imagine the feeling of a fish to be, if he has been left by the tide in a land-locked pool, and begins to feel the flow of the returning waters; or what we can suppose to be the delight of the dragon-fly when he shuffles off the skin

of his life in the pool and feels his wings expanding for flight."

"O free indeed! O gloriously free! The breath of Liberty sweeps o'er my soul"—such is the paean of the early Buddhists, monk and nun.

And whilst Gotama himself lived they had, no doubt, a sense of personal devotion which in some measure made up for the sense of that presence of the "Divine Lover," which is so real a thing to the Christian mystic.[1]

Did Gotama encourage such devotion? There are passages which would lead one to think that he saw in it a help ready to hand to those who would tread the austere path along which he sought to guide them, and yet were not ready for austerity in its most Buddhistic heights! He certainly encouraged an attitude of *Śaddha* (or faith), which means in Buddhist psychology serene and glad confidence that all is well, because the teaching is true and the teacher infallible.[2] "The glad *bhikkhu* who puts his trust in the Buddha's preaching, goes to *Nibbāna*, calm and blissful end of rebirth."[3]

So we find Kassapa attributing "faith" to Gotama himself: he is *śaddhahattho mahāmuni*, "the great Seer, who has faith as his hand"[4]—a fine description, which reminds us of Godet's saying "Faith is the hand of the heart"—and in the same poem Kassapa cries: "The Master has my fealty and love . . . low have I laid the heavy load I bore"; and we cannot doubt that personal devotion to the teacher played a very great part in his religion. "My heart is joined to him," says the aged Pingiya, whose joy and solace was to see the Master with the eyes of his mind.[5]

This devotion was in part the reverence and respect due to him as Leader of the *Saṅgha*, and as "the most

[1] Percy Gardner, *The Religious Experience of St. Paul*, p. 38.

[2] See Childer's Pāli Dictionary, p. 352. The words *pasāda*, *cittapasāda*, and *manopasāda*, are constantly used in the sense of faith in Buddha, literally rejoicing because of the joy or peace of mind which faith in Buddha brings with it.

[3] *Dhp.*, 381.

[4] *Theragāthā*, 1090.

[5] *Sutta Nipāta*.

honoured Elder Brother of the world":[1] but it did not lack a more romantic and even passionate note. Sometimes Gotama would check any such personal element in it, as when his followers wanted to celebrate a festival in his honour, and he said drily, "Your business is with morality," and certainly he would have disapproved of the title "beloved disciple" given by modern writers to Ānanda; but a great and winsome personality has to put up with the devotion he inspires, and perhaps even Gotama realised that there are limits to human powers of repression! Devotion to this great teacher soon became the vital and central thing in the new religion. The beloved leader became not only *deva*, but *devatideva*, god of gods![2] "From the beginning," says Dr. Macnicol, "there was rendered to Buddha what can only be described as worship, though it was not at first a *bhakti*, a devotion. No place is found in the early 'Vehicle' for grace or for prayer in any sense that religion can recognise. But Buddha places himself in a relation to his monks such as is bound to develop into a full-orbed worship with a service of love when he says to them, 'Whoever would wait upon me, he should wait upon the sick.'"[3] With this I find myself in almost complete agreement; it is only of this application of the Buddha's saying that I am not quite sure—for may it not be that this was one of the cases, and there are many, in which he was gently seeking to disentangle the tendrils of personal affection from himself? In support of this view there are several incidents such as that of Vakkali, a Brahmin convert who seems to have spent his time gazing at

[1] "*Jettho Settho Lokassa*"—this is the name which seems to me most clearly to express the correct attitude of his early followers towards Gotama.

[2] In the *Itivuttaka*, §22, Gotama is made to declare, "I reach the empty palace of Brahmā: I become myself Brahmā omnipotent," and in the *Cullavagga* (*Sacred Books of the East*, XII, 58) he is addressed as "Śakka"—another name for Indra.

[3] *Indian Theism*, p. 71, quoting *Mahāvagga*, VIII, 26 (*Sacred Books of the East*, XVII, 240).

Gotama, till he was courteously but firmly reminded that "He who seeth the teaching he it is who seeth the teacher."[1] Gotama seems ever to have been restless in the presence of the devotee! He urged on all his followers energy and sturdy effort, and such devotions may be enervating.

There is a passage in the *Majjhima Nikāya*, which makes the matter quite clear: "Whosoever shall turn to me," says Gotama, "with faith and love—he shall reach the heaven-world. And whatsoever monks shall conform themselves to the teaching, walking in full faith—these shall attain to the Full Awakening."[2]

Devotion to the teacher, in a word, will carry you far; obedience to his teaching alone will "see you through" to *Nibbāna*. And it is certain that he encouraged more than any other gift or practice, an earnest and mindful effort to follow the austere doctrine he taught. "He who is near me," says the *Itivuttaka*, "yet is covetous, lustful, and malevolent is far from me." For with all his kindliness Gotama is an austere figure; surgeon as well as physician;[3] schoolmaster as well as brother; king as well as friend.[4]

He was by no means always gentle in his dealing with opponents. Sometimes he realised that they were fools and perverse, and left them severely alone; thus when the brethren of the monastery of Kosambī were wrangling he entreated them, for the sake of their influence on the world at large, to make up the quarrel, and when they were obdurate left them abruptly, saying, "Truly these fools are infatuate; it is no easy task to issue instructions to them."[5] At other times he so cross-examined and harassed opponents by his remorseless logic that they cried out, "A man might

[1] *Theragāthā*, CCV.

[2] *Discourses of Gotama*, tr. by Silācāra, I, 181.

[3] "I am the incomparable physician, who in healing cause pain," *Itivuttaka*, §100.

[4] "I am the incomparable King of the Dhamma, turning the irresistible wheel," *Mahāvagga* (*Sacred Books of the East*, XII).

[5] *Mahāvagga*, X, 2.

go unscathed to meet an elephant in rut, but not to the Venerable Gotama! A man might go unscathed to a blazing fire, but not to the Venerable Gotama! A man might go unscathed to a formidable, poisonous reptile, but not to the Venerable Gotama!" To the hapless Aggivessana he pointed out that the sweat was pouring from him at the close of their dialogue![1] Nor did he hesitate to catechise his own followers very thoroughly, pressing them point by point to acknowledge that they had still some way to travel upon the road to Attainment. He moves amongst them with the ease and dignity of unquestioned authority, and with straightforward bluntness at the very last, when Ānanda had ventured to comment upon the remarkable fact that in the great assembly of the faithful there was not one who entertained any doubt as to the doctrine of Gotama, he replies: "You say this in faith, Ānanda, but I say it because I know it."

It is this kind of thing which has led to the impression that he was pompous and very solemn. For example, the early records say that he smiled for the first time in seven years when he visited Kapilavatthu after his Enlightenment! The traditional statues of him also show a dignified and solemn countenance, but there are some in which his face is lit with a smile, and one would fain believe that these are truer to the facts: thus Sunīta, whose story is told above, tells us that the Master smiled on him. There are certainly sayings attributed to him which are humorous enough; and it is significant that several occur in the record of his last days; perhaps because this record—the *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*—is really early, and the figure of the teacher was not yet conventionalised. Thus, when Ānanda asked how he should comport himself in the presence of women, he replied, "Avoid them altogether"; and when the literal Ānanda urged the point that sometimes one might meet them unawares, "Then

[1] Yet he usually had a kind word for his opponent as soon as he capitulated.

keep wide awake, Ānanda," replied the teacher.[1] And there is a pathetic yet whimsical humour in some of the incidents already recorded. There is a playfulness about his questioning of his followers which reminds us at times of Socrates with his youthful disciples. Much he had, too, of the great teacher's passion for intellectual truth, and this can hardly be unaccompanied by a sense of humour, which is after all largely a sense of proportion.

There is, moreover, a pointedness and brevity about many of the sayings attributed to Gotama which many fairly be called humour, often of a grim kind enough:

"A man is not wise through much speaking."

"To see another's fault is easy: hard is it to see one's own."

"No man is made an 'elder' by his grey locks: mere old age is called empty old age."

"'Here will I pass the wet season, here the winter and summer,' thinks the fool, unmindful of what may befall. Then comes Death and sweeps him hence."

"Better swallow a ball of iron heated red, than to live unworthy on the alms of the faithful."[2]

"As one who wraps up stinking fish in a wisp of fragrant grass, so is he who keepeth company with fools."[3]

We must believe, then, that his solemn and earnest teaching was not unlit by humour of a grim kind, and that this went far to relieve the austerity of the teacher; and a certain graciousness and intimacy of tone when with his disciples do still more to convince us that it was a very human figure whom they reverenced and even worshipped.

[1] Yet it is fair to add that later accounts, *e.g.* the Burmese, add the beautiful words, "When, however, you must speak to women, consider them, if they are aged, as mothers, and if they are young, treat them as sisters." There has been progress in Buddhist lands as elsewhere in this matter, till in Burma there is real partnership between man and wife.

[2] *Dhammapada*, 252, 258, 260, 286, 297. Translation by Wagiswara and Saunders.

[3] *Itivuttaka*, 76.

As he lay dying he asked them, it will be remembered, certain questions: and when they remained silent he sought to put them at their ease: "Maybe it is from reverence to the Teacher that ye keep silence: let us rather speak as friend to friend."[1]

For in a land where all are courteous Gotama was pre-eminent for courtesy,[2] and in a land where humility is always honoured, he was, in spite of the tremendous claims made on his behalf, great in his humility.

[1] *Mahāpari-nibbāna Sutta.*

[2] The *Milinda Pañha* quotes Sāriputta as saying, "The Blessed One was always perfect in courtesy" (*Sacred Books of the East*, XXXV, 229).

VII

GOTAMA AS TEACHER

The gift of the Teaching excels all other gifts.—Dhammapada 354.

We have seen that Gotama claimed to be "King of the *Dhamma*," and it is as a teacher of morals that he must be finally judged. It is chiefly so that he viewed his own mission ; like Socrates he was a physician of the soul, and anything that did not tend to moral health he ignored. In this sphere he claims to teach as one who is himself without fault, and it was largely his moral prestige which won for him so ready a hearing. This claim, explicity made in many passages such as those quoted above,[1] is implied in several of his sayings : "Does this man, himself a slave to desire," he asks concerning a sceptical monk, "claim to excel the teaching of the Master ?"[2] and that teaching was almost exclusively concerned with the moral life and its reward.

Gotama was not a social reformer except in the secondary sense which is true of all religious and moral teachers ; he is said, in fact, to have warned some of his monks to avoid the example of certain heretics who were acting also as doctors.[3] Their task was to administer a moral tonic : let them see to it!

Nor was he a teacher of philosophy ; again and again he insists that he has no concern with meta-

[1] See also *Anguttara Nikāya*, IV, 82, quoted by Poussin, *Opinions*, p. 142.

[2] *Samyutta Nikāya*, III, 103. *Ibid.*, p. 149.

[3] *Tevijja Sutta* (*Sacred Books of the East*, XI, 200).

physics, and when men press him for information on such high and difficult matters as the origin of the world, he refuses to discuss them.

"It is, Brothers, as if a man were pierced through by a poisoned arrow, and his friends, companions, and near relatives called in a surgeon, and he should say, 'I will not have this arrow pulled out until I know who the man is that has wounded me; whether he is of the royal caste or of the priests' caste, a citizen or a servant'; or else he should say, 'I will not have his arrow pulled out until I know who the man is that has wounded me, whether he is tall or short, or of medium height'; verily, Brothers, such an one would die ere he could sufficiently get to know all this."[1]

So convinced was he that these metaphysical speculations were unprofitable that on one occasion he departed from his habitual reverence for the gods to tell a story of the visit of one of his disciples to Brahmā, who, after several vain attempts at parrying the questions, confessed that he had no answer to give and sent him back to Gotama who alone could satisfy him. To whom Gotama spoke with kindly irony, "As a bird whom sailors loose to discover land, comes back if it fail to find it, so having failed to find the truth from Brahmā thou returnest to me."[2] Gotama's real attitude to Brahmā is probably best indicated in the *Tevijja Sutta*, where he laughs at the Brahmin claim to have communion with Brahmā and says in immortal words, "To pervade the world with kindliness, pity, sympathy, and equable feeling—that is the way to union with Brahmā."

In another place he discusses six current views about the soul and describes them as "mere views, a snare of views, a labyrinth of views, a puppet-show of views, a tangle of views, in which the worlding, ignorant of the truth, is entangled so that he cannot be freed from rebirth, from decay, and death, from sorrow, lamentation, and despair."

[1] *Majjhima Nikāya*, I, 8. [2] *Dīgha Nikāya*, I, 215.

Gotama, then, looked upon himself as a physican,[1] who had a practical cure to offer men; and inasmuch as all were sick he felt the urgency and greatness of his task. In his diagnosis all men suffer because all sin; if they would be free from suffering they must free themselves from sin. Asked how this is done, he replies that it can only be by strenuous effort each man for himself. This is cold comfort, but he grasped the all-important truth that such things as greed, anger, delusion, have their lodging in the mind and heart, and he gave sane and practical advice as to how they may be dislodged. Thus in the *Majjhima Nikāya* he lays down five methods of expelling evil thoughts:[2]

1. By replacing them with wholesome thoughts;
2. By manfully facing evil ideas and seeing how unwholesome and pernicious and sorrow-fraught they are;
3. By refusing to pay attention to them;
4. By analyzing them and seeing of what they are really composed;
5. By suppressing them "with clenched teeth and tongue pressed against the gums."

It is to strenuous self-control that he calls his disciples, and that is the central meaning of the elaborate system of meditation and mind-culture which the *Saṅgha* carefully built up. "May muscle, skin, and sinews, may bones, flesh, and blood shrivel and dry up rather than I should abandon my efforts while as yet I have not attained to all that is attainable by human perseverance, energy, and effort. This, Brothers, is right effort."

Right effort is to be assisted by a method of analysis which is essential to the system of Gotama. The good Buddhist is to contemplate his own body and analyse it with anatomical mind, until he is convinced that it is

[1] Buddha-ghosa's Commentary on the *Pirit* calls Gotama "physician" because he cures the disease of desire with the medicine of *Dhamma*; and "surgeon" because he amputates false views.

[2] *Majjhima Nikāya*, 20.



AMIDA BUDDHA

AT KAMAKURA, JAPAN

Bronze, of the thirteenth century, 49 ft. 7 in. high



LIST OF CITIES INDICATED BY NUMERALS

1. Amarāvatī
2. Ayodhyā
3. Bhrigu-kaccha
4. Çākala
5. Çrāvastī (Sāvatthi)
6. Indraprastha
7. Kāñchī
8. Kānyakubja
9. Mathurā
10. Mithilā
11. Pāṭaliputra
12. Pratishṭhāna
13. Prayāga
14. Takshaçila
15. Ujjayinī
16. Vaijayantī

built up of so many bones, so many muscles, so many nerves, and so forth. Then he is to contemplate the foulness of these things: "The body has hair on the head, is covered with hair, has nails, and teeth, skin and flesh, bones and marrow, liver and intestines; it has certain juices, secretions and excretions." This analysis leads to disgust and detachment. Or the disciple is to go further:

"And further still, Brothers, just as if the disciple should see a corpse lying on the burial ground, one day dead, or two are three days dead, swollen up, blue-black in colour, a prey to corruption, he concludes as regards himself, 'My body also shall so become, has a like destiny, cannot escape it.'

"And further still, Brothers, just as if the disciple should see a corpse lying in the burial ground, picked to pieces by crows, or ravens, or vultures, stripped of its flesh by dogs or jackals, or gnawed by all kinds of worms, he concludes as regards himself, 'And my body also shall so become, has a like destiny, cannot escape it.'"[1]

Buddhism has been called "the religion of analysis," and its claims to psychological exactitude are deservedly recognised, for Gotama was an intuitive psychologist of no mean order. Yet in this method of arousing disgust modern psychology will find a strongly perverse attempt to play off the instinct of repulsion and the accompanying emotion of disgust against other emotions and instincts which are of more abiding value for the religious life.

And in considering Gotama as teacher we are bound to ask such questions as these: Does this method of analysis not destroy all it touches? And is it not better to sublimate the instincts and emotions than to repress them? The Buddhist method of analysis would reduce the works of Shakesphere to a combination of thirty-six little black marks on a white ground! And with our modern knowledge of the material universe it would

[1] *Dīgha Nikāya*, 22.

reduce the starry firmament to a combination of chemical elements. This kind of analysis does not arrive at religious truth. If it be urged that Gotama's object was to rouse men to disgust for the things which he analysed, *e.g.* the human body and mind, it is surely a fair reply that the instinct of curiosity and the emotion of wonder are of greater worth to religion and morality than the instinct of repulsion and the emotion of disgust; and one has only to compare these strange analytic passages in which Buddhism deals with the body, with the reverence and wonder of the 139th Psalm, or with the plea of St. Paul: "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit?" to realise that, in its desire to stab the soul awake, Buddhist teaching is guilty of the *reductio ad absurdum* of the method of analysis.

This method Gotama sought to apply to practical purpose. In the first place he tried by it to eradicate anger and hatred. "Tell me, friend," he says to one who is cherishing resentment, "with whom art thou offended? Is it with the hair of his head that thou art wroth, or with his finger nails, or with any part of his physical frame, or is it with any part of the elements of his consciousness that thou art angry?"[1] In the second place he applied the method to the eradication of sex passion:

"Suppose that there is a maiden of the warrior or the Brahmin or the householder class, in all the charm of her fifteen or sixteen summers; not too tall, not too short, not too slim, not too stout, not too dark, not too fair—is she not at this period at her very loveliest in form and feature? Whatsoever pleasure and satisfaction arises at the sight of this beauty and loveliness—that is of the delights of form. . . .

"Suppose that, after a time, one sees this same sister when she is eighty or ninety or a hundred years old, broken-down, crooked as a roof-tree rafter, bowed,

[1] *Visuddhi Magga*, IX. Warren, *Buddhism in Translations*, p. 159.

tottering along leaning on a staff, wasted, withered, all wrinkled and blotched, with broken teeth, grey hair, trembling head. What think ye, monks? That former loveliness of form and feature—has it not disappeared and given place to wretchedness?

"Again, should one see this sister, sick, suffering, sore afflicted, lying fouled in her own filth, lifted up by others, tended by others—what think ye, monks? Is not that which aforetime was beauty and loveliness wholly departed, and in its place, wretchedness?

"Again, should one see this sister after the body has been lying at the burial-place one, two, or three days, bloated, discoloured, putrefying, picked at by crows and and hawks and vultures, gnawed by dogs and jackals, and all manner of crawling things. Or should one see the body, when it is a mere blood-bespattered skeleton, hung with rags of flesh, or when the bones are all scattered this way and that; or when, white as a sea shell, they are flung together in a heap; or when, after the lapse of a year, they are all weathered away to dust. What think ye, monks? All that grace and beauty which was aforetime—is it not wholly fled, and in its place, wretchedness? But this is the wretchedness of form."[1]

May we not ask whether such reasoning can really hope to succeed when the floodgates of passion are opened, and whether it is indeed desirable that it should? It is surely a radical fault in the method of Gotama as teacher that he dealt too summarily with the natural and primary instincts and emotions, which a great teacher must sublimate and not suppress. "There are two ways in which a practical moralist may attempt to displace from the human heart its love of the world, either by a demonstration of the world's vanity, so that the heart shall be prevailed upon to withdraw its regard from an object which is not worthy of it; or by setting forth another object, even God, as more worthy of its attachment; so that the heart shall be prevailed upon not to resign an old affection which shall have nothing to succeed it, but

[1] *Dialogues of Gotama*, tr. by Silācāra, I, 111, 112.

to exchange an old affection for a new one." In these words, spoken a hundred years ago, Thomas Chalmers began his famous sermon, now chiefly known by its title, "The Expulsive Power of a New Affection." "From the constitution of our nature," he went on, "the former method is altogether incompetent and ineffectual . . . for the heart must have something to cling to, and never by its own voluntary consent will it so denude itself of all its attachments that there shall not be one remaining object that can draw or solicit it. . . . The love of the world cannot be expunged by a mere demonstration of the world's worthlessness, but may it not be supplanted by the love of that which is more worthy than itself?"

These words ring true. They spring from a study of the method of Jesus of Nazareth, and they are entirely borne out by psychological science. Gotama seems to have ignored entirely the fact that there is a noble anger and a noble love of woman, and he dealt too summarily also with other instincts and the emotions. Take, for example, the parental instinct and the tender emotion which accompanies it. Very early in his career the people of Magadha cried out that he was filling the land with widows and orphans; and while it is true that he pointed the laity to lives of filial piety, yet home life he placed on a lower plane, considering it at best a preparation for that higher Order, the celibate life of the *Saṅgha*. It may be urged that within the *Saṅgha* the parental instinct was given free play in the care for the sick and the teaching of other people's children; it is true that Sāriputta is described as caring specially for the sick; but this was irregular;[1] and there is little evidence to show that the *Saṅgha* of those days were schoolmasters as they are to-day in Burma; indeed, their wandering life precluded any regular teaching of the young or any other systematic philanthropy. Buddhism in fact teaches benevolence rather than beneficence on the part of the monk.

[1] Cf. passage quoted above from the *Tevijja Sutta*.

Or again, take the instinct of pugnacity and the emotion of anger. The great religious teachers whom we know as the "prophets" of Israel sublimated this instinct and gave to their people a moral equivalent for war by their preaching of social righteousness, and by their fierce denunciation of the oppressor and the extortioner; but righteous anger is unthinkable in the Buddhist system. Gotama sought to suppress anger altogether as a part of that complex root of all sorrow that he called *Tanhā*. So often does he call for the eradication of greed, anger, and lust that most Western writers hold that he aimed at the extinction of all desire; and in a famous passage he says: "When greed, anger, and hate have been rooted out, then the actions due to them are torn out as a palm tree uprooted from the soil, and do not lead to future rebirth." "Hence, O Brothers, one may rightly say of me, 'The ascetic Gotama teaches negation, the ascetic Gotama teaches annihilation'; for certainly, Brothers, I teach annihilation—the annihilation namely, of Greed, the annihilation of Anger, the annihilation of Delusion, as well as the annihilation of the manifold evil, unwholesome conditions of the mind."

Though Gotama did not really aim at the extinction of all desire, but of all desire which is not consistent with the Buddhist system, yet that covers most of the field of human affection!

The disciples of modern Buddhism do not dispute that it is a coldly reasonable system. "It is true," says Paul Dalkhe, "that there breathes about this system something of the coldness of mathematics; on the other hand there lives in it that purest and sublimest beauty, that taintless beauty, which belongs only to mathematics."[1] Most of us will be forgiven if the pure and sublime beauty of mathematics has eluded us, and the parallel is particularly apt, for whilst the higher mathematics do make their appeal to a few peculiarly constituted minds, they leave the majority of us cold;

[1] *Buddhist Essays*, E.T., p. 189.

and in any case they are not a good substitute for religion! The modern Buddhist has to confess sorrowfully that for the great bulk of mankind, the teachings of Gotama are too high and austere. It will be remembered that he himself realised after his Enlightenment that this must necessarily be so, and we are told that it took a visit of Brahmā himself to overcome his hesitation on setting forth to preach his new doctrine. For "There are some whose eyes are only a little darkened with dust, and they will perceive the truth." What if this dust of desire be good and not evil? What if man is intended to be a lover, and his passions and instincts are part of that great plan of the universe which Gotama seems at times so clearly to recognise?

Yet though he dealt summarily with the emotions he is not to be regarded as a merely negative teacher. He sought to inculcate wisdom of a practical nature, and to turn men into paths of benevolence, and he did it by an appeal to their reason. This becomes immediately clear if we will contrast the narratives of the conversion of some of the Buddhist saints, such as Sāriputta, with that of some of the saints of Christianity. Buddhist conversion consists very often in a calm realisation that the law of cause and effect is universal and that suffering and transiency are the law of the universe. This realisation Gotama calls the essential knowledge[1] and holds up as the principle of life. It is knowledge of the four Noble Truths, and men have but to face the facts of life to realise their truth. So Gotama teaches. Take the fact of sorrow:

"What think you, Brothers? Which is greater, the floods of tears which, weeping and wailing you have shed upon this long way, ever and again hastening towards new birth and new death, united to the undesired, separated from the desired, this, or the waters of the Four Great Seas?"

[1] For a comparison of Buddhist and Christian ideals see my verses "St. Francis and Gotama" and my *Buddhist Ideals.*

"Long time, Brothers, have you suffered the death of a mother, for long the death of a father, for long the death of a son, for long the death of a daughter, for long the death of brothers and sisters; long time have ye undergone the loss of your goods, long time have you been afflicted with disease. And because you have experienced the death of a mother, the death of a father, the death of a son, the death of a daughter, the death of brothers and sisters, the loss of goods, the pangs of disease, having been united with the undesired and separated from the desired, you have verily shed more tears upon this long way—hastening from birth to death, from death to birth—than all the waters that are held in the Four Great Seas."

And if this be so, the logical mind will take the next step and will show that all this sorrow must have a cause, and will be ready to agree with Gotama that the cause of the suffering is to be found in that clinging to existence, and that attachment to transient things like family affection! But he may also agree with Eben Holden that "Affections are a sing'lar kind of property: No good for anything till ye've gi'n 'em away!"

As to the third truth, that the way to get rid of sorrow is to get rid of its cause (*tanhā*), that also is logical enough, and as to the Noble Eight-Fold Path, high and austere as it is, it is one possible road along which he who seeks freedom from pain may pass.

But most would agree that the system sprang from a mind obsessed with the pain of life, and blind to its many joys. "Minnit a man stops lookin' for trouble," says Eben Holden, "happiness will look fer him." But by a principle of selective attention, Gotama fixes upon the sorrowful things, and takes as an axiom that what is transient must need be painful! And we may trace in his teachings on this subject the permanent effects of a shock to a sensitive nature of the first meeting with old age, disease, and death, which is so vividly recorded in the legend of the Four Visions which came to him at Kapilavatthu:

"How can you laugh, how can you feel delight in earthly things? Did you never see among you a man or a woman, eighty, ninety, or a hundred years old, decrepit, crooked as a gable-roof, bowed forward, supported on a staff, staggering along with tottering steps, wretched, youth long since fled, toothless, bleached hair hanging in wisps over the blotched and wrinkled brow? And did the thought never come to you then: 'I also am subject to Decay; by no means can I escape it'?

Did you never see amongst you men or women who, laden with grievous disease, twisted with pain, wallowing in their own filth, and when they had been lifted up, were obliged to lie down again? And did the thought never come to you then: 'I also am subject to Disease; by no means can I escape it'?

"Did you never see amongst you a corpse that had lain for one, two, or three days, swollen up, blue-black in colour, a prey to corruption, and did the thought never come to you then: 'I also am subject to Death; by no means can I escape it'?"[1]

So it is to-day, and in Buddhist lands the cry, "*Anicca Dukkha Anatta*," rings out like the solemn tolling of a monastery bell, calling men away from that which is fleeting, sorrowful, and without abiding reality."

When we study in more detail the psychological method of Buddhism, we find that there are seven elements of Enlightenment (*Bojjhanga*) which are born of solitude and detachment, and which lead to freedom; these are Attentiveness, Penetrating Insight, Energy, Interest, Calmness, Concentration, and Equanimity. In other words, the state of mind which is advocated is one of concentrated attention, or a bringing of the mind to a point with energy and a calm aloofness from all things irrelevant. Buddhist psychology delights in classification; thus, in addition to these seven elements of enlightenment, there are six super-normal sciences to be attained by Buddhist mind culture; there are five hindrances which prevent the right frame of mind, and

[1] *Anguttara Nikāya.*

so on. The six *Abhiññā*, or super-normal powers that follow upon the right practice of trances and meditation, are:

1. The power to produce magical effects or to work miracles.
2. The heavenly ear by which one can hear what takes place in heaven as well as on earth.
3. The knowledge by which one sees into the hearts and minds of other beings.
4. The memory of previous existences.
5. The heavenly eye by which one is enabled to see the causes of rebirth, to realise why it is that some are born base and some noble, some beautiful and some ugly, some rich and others poor.
6. The power to put an end to illusion and to attain, even in this life, deliverance through wisdom.

This at once makes it clear that while in its general teaching Buddhism is simple and open to all the world—"One thing only do I teach, O Brothers, suffering and deliverance from suffering"—yet it is in these higher reaches as difficult and obscure as any other system of mysticism, a religion for the *virtuoso* rather than for the man in the street. The primitive narratives are shot through with these ideas, but to see them fully developed one must study the commentaries of the schoolmen of Buddhism, to be found in the *Abhidhamma* and especially in two volumes available to English readers: *A Compendium of Philosophy* edited by the Burmese scholar, Shwe Zan Aung; and *Buddhist Psychology*, by Mrs. Rhys Davids. Indeed, they are to be found nowhere but in such books. By universal consent the adherents of Buddhism to-day, except perhaps in the Zen sect of Japan (and there in a very much modified form), have given up seeking to practice these inner things of their religion, and this fact must be weighed as we try to estimate the greatness of Gotama as a teacher.

When we contemplate his compassion to all living things, his calm dignity, and the conviction with which he spoke, when we realise the greatness of his influence, not only upon those with whom he came in contact but

upon unnumbered millions during 2,500 years, we cannot but acclaim him as one of the greatest figures in human history. Yet the biographer must record the failure as well as the success of his hero, and facts must be faced: there is something in Gotama's system which in the end of the day spells failure, or rather it lacks that one thing which alone can guarantee success—a true idea of God. He seems to have trembled on the verge of the great discovery which makes the Hebrew prophets such great and heroic figures and which makes their teaching immortal: the flaming certainty that God is righteous and loving. But Gotama drew back from this conclusion, and deliberately concentrated his attention upon man. A disciple has said of him, "He was most godless, and yet most godlike."[1] He was certainly a rationalist. He recognised, it is true, that there were gods, and he even hinted at his belief in a supreme God, but the religious leaders of his people did not seem to know of a God at once supremely righteous and supremely loving; the bright figures of the Vedic Pantheon were not such as he could worship, and though for a moment Varuṇa had loomed large in the religious mind of his people, he had somehow fallen once more into the background. Thus Gotama seems to have argued: "We cannot know the supreme God: let us at any rate behave as we may suppose that He would behave. Let us ignore anything except humanity; but let us raise humanity to the highest level we can discern for it. If there is any way to union with Brahmā it is by way of kindliness to men."

But a true doctrine of man and right attitude to men flow from a right view of God! There is abundant proof outside Buddhism that he who does not know God cannot know or really love man; and the reason why Gotama has failed as a teacher is that he has taken the sane and human view of his subject rather than the romantic and divine! "God," it has been said, "is incurably romantic," and it is only when we realise this that we

[1] Lakshmi Narasu, apparently quoting Dr. E. W. Hopkins.

know how to deal with men. And so when we study the history of Buddhism we find that its early ethic is too coldly reasonable, too severely logical for human nature. It may be quite reasonable to leave parents, wife, and child whilst one seeks one's own salvation. But is it "cricket"?[1]

In the realm of logic itself Gotama is, moreover, not entirely successful. Let us consider his teaching concerning free will—a problem which every ethical teacher must needs face. It is clear that he took man's freedom as axiomatic. When we find him dealing with rival teachers, we note that he is most severe upon those who teach a doctrine of determinism. He would agree with his follower, Purana Kassapa, who argued against Ajita of the Hair-Blanket, that his materialist doctrine destroys all personal responsibility; for if it is true, "there is no guilt to the murderer, the thief, and the adulterer."[2]

Concerned as early Buddhism was with morality, it must combat any doctrine which imperilled a sense of personal responsibility; yet Gotama at times himself came perilously near to determinism; and we must needs test his work as a teacher by the consistency and sanity of his handling of this central problem. The problem of *Karma* as he found it in India was a mathematical doctrine of retribution and reward: "As a man soweth so shall he reap," either in this world or in his next rebirth, and he reaps not only happiness or sorrow, but also the dispositions which make for happiness or sorrow. Gotama accepted all this. According to his teaching, *Kamma*, as he called the doctrine, "explains everything that concerns 'the world of living beings' (*Sattvaloka*), inhabitants of hell, animals, ghosts, men,

[1] Cf. the typical sentiment of an early *Bhikkhu*: "I have vomited forth all desires, loves, hates. For my own sake have I done so, not for any others' sake" (*Theragāthā*).

First get rid of egoism, then you will have room for altruism —is the logic of these early days. Only later did Buddhists realise that the second is the way to the first.

[2] *Dialogues of Gotama Buddha*, I, 71-73.

and gods; the power of gods and kings, the physical beauty of women, the splendid tail of peacocks, the moral dispositions of everyone."[1] Is man then free? Yes, for destiny is the power of one's own actions: these are at once "man's inheritance, the womb which bears him, and the refuge to which he must resort."[2] Yet each action is predetermined by disposition, and disposition is predetermined by past action—largely yet not wholly; there is still a loophole for free will. By "a most happy contradiction" Gotama accepts the doctrine that "what we have been makes us what we are," but keeps attached to it the doctrine that we are free to do good, for he is really more physician than mathematician, and what really matters is that we should strive with energy to combat whatever works against virtue, whether our own inherited disposition or our evil environment. As we have seen, he was led to reject any theory of a transmigrating soul, and any doctrine of an "over-soul" in which it must one day be merged: for he wanted to throw upon man himself the responsibility for his own actions, and to convince him at any price that he must work out his own salvation; the direction of each "stream" is self-determined; even if the "undercurrent" from the past be very strong and seem at times to exert an overwhelming force.

This, his doctrine of *Kamma*, is "the root of morality," and if we cannot convince ourselves that he succeeded in reconciling the claims of free will with those of predetermination, his followers would reply, "His purpose was not to teach metaphysics but to inculcate strenuous morality; and, besides, other teachers of ethics are equally open to criticism. Gotama is not the only moralist who had failed to reconcile these claims."

We agree. Short of the solution of Jesus that there is a divine grace yearning to help us overcome the

[1] De la Vallée Poussin, *The Way to Nirvana*, p. 94.
[2] *Majjhima Nikāya*, III, 203.

tremendous forces of heredity and environment which are too often ranged against us—that the Righteous Ruler of the Universe has a Father's heart, and that He who sets man his problem is anxious to help him to solve it—short of this, there is no solution yet offered to mankind. And Christians will be very gentle with the Buddhist solution when they consider that some even of their fellow-Christians are content to be agnostic like Gotama as to any ultimate reconciliation between free will and predestination. If Gotama did not succeed in a logical solution, he attempted to base his ethical system on reason and did succeed in effecting in his own conduct a practical combination of benevolence and self-interest—a benevolence which whilst it is self-regarding is not selfish, and which while it is based on reason avoids calculation.

Cold and mathematical as is the ethic of Gotama, yet through it there gleams the wintry sunshine of a higher and more passionate teaching: he seems at times to realise that one emotion can only be cast out by another. "Never by hate does hatred cease: by kindness only does it cease," says the *Dhammapada*, and side by side with a reasonable self-culture goes a reasoned benevolence. Perhaps we may express it thus: The ethic of Gotama is like a radiant butterfly just struggling out of the chrysalis. One wing is quite free—the wing of Wisdom; one is still only partially disentangled—the wing of Love or Benevolence.

In the *Majjhima Nikāya* there is a discourse entitled "The Saw" which is much less stereotyped and formal than many of the discourses, and contains some admirable illustrations which are full of quaint humour. The occasion of it was that one of the leaders had become closely associated with the nuns, and when people spoke slightingly of them used to get very angry. Gotama sent for him. Very gently he showed him that a true follower of the Good Law must remain kindly and compassionate whatever people say about him. This friendly spirit, he urged, must be cultivated, just as the sapling must be trained; and went on to tell

the story of a housewife named Vedēhika, who had a great name for goodness and kindness, but whose serving-maid Kali had succeeded in so trying her patience with deliberate intent to prove her that she came out of the affair with a broken head, and the rumour quickly spread, "The Mistress Vedēhika is a perfect fury, a shrew, a termagant."

"In the selfsame way, disciples, a certain monk may be very, very kind, very, very gentle, very, very quiet, so long as no unpleasant words are uttered touching him. When, however, people begin to say unpleasant things of that monk—then is the time to see if the monk is kind, then it is to be seen if the monk is gentle, then it is to be seen if he is quiet."

What then is to be done with those who speak unkindly of us? We are to "permeate them with a stream of loving thought," and so we are to act towards the whole world. After sundry illustrations the discourse ends with these fine words:

"Yea, disciples, even if highway robbers with a two-handed saw shall take and dismember you limb by limb, whoso grow darkened in mind thereby would not be fulfilling my injunctions. Even then, disciples, thus must you school yourselves: 'Unsullied shall our minds remain, neither shall evil word escape our lips. Kind and compassionate ever, we will abide loving of heart nor harbour secret hate. And those robbers will we permeate with stream of loving thought unfailing; and forth from them proceeding, enfold and permeate the whole wide world with constant thoughts of loving kindness, ample, expanding, measureless, free from enmity, free from all ill will!' Yea, verily, thus, my my disciples; thus must you school yourselves.

"And this admonition of the Parable of the Saw see that you call it to mind again and again. Know you, disciples, aught subtle or simple in this teaching of ours which you should not accept?

"'Nay indeed, Lord!'

"Wherefore, disciples, again and again refresh your minds with this admonition of the Parable of the

Saw. Long will it make for your happiness and well-being."[1]

For as the mongoose is immune from the poison of the snake because he has been inoculated with it in small doses, even so, teaches Gotama the physician, must the monk dwelling amidst hate and anger inoculate himself with the divine antitoxin of benevolence.[2]

"As in the last month of the autumn rains, when the sky is clear and the clouds are gone, the great Sun climbs the vault of heaven, pervading all space with his radiance, so good will (*mettam*) glows radiant above all other virtues: yea, it is as the morning star."[3]

When all is said, it was by the living embodiment of this divine quality of good will that Gotama won the hearts of his people. If to-day he does not always command our intellectual assent we should be churls indeed if we refused to him our love and gratitude.

Gotama is himself a morning star of good will heralding the Sun of Love.

[1] *Discourses*, tr. by Silācāra, I, xxi.
[2] *Milinda Pañha*, VII, 6.
[3] *Itivuttaka*, 27.

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